

# OUT

PHOTOGRAPHED BY  
JACK WATERLOT  
FOR OUT



# IDOL

**ADAM LAMBERT**







WILL YOU PROMISE TO NEVER STOP COMPLETING MY  
SENTENCES OR SINGING OFF-KEY, WHICH I'M AFRAID YOU  
DO OFTEN? AND WILL YOU LET TODAY BE THE FIRST  
SENTENCE OF ONE LONG STORY THAT NEVER, EVER ENDS?

WILL YOU?



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BOTTEGA VENETA



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### ON THE COVER:

Adam Lambert photographed for *Out* by Jack Waterlot. Styling by Alison Brooks. Tank top by **Ann Demeulemeester**. Jacket by **Resurrection** available at Church Boutique, L.A.

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*Cozying up with the Gay Beards*





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### GREG VAUGHAN

**In This Issue:** Photographer, "The Exhibitionist" page 72

**Bio:** Born in the Port of Spain, Trinidad, Vaughan has lived in New York City for two decades. Inspired by people-watching and travel, he previously worked as a makeup artist for 15 years. His photos have appeared in *Made in Brazil*, *Da Man*, *Saks Fifth Avenue*, *Rollacoaster*, and *Arena*.

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### ANGUS CHEN



**In This Issue:** Writer, "The Battle to Replicate the Body's Most Complex Organ," page 37

**Bio:** Angus Chen is a freelance reporter based in New York. He spent time trying to become a scientist before realizing he liked talking about science much more than

he liked actually doing it. His work has appeared in *Science* and *Discover*, and on NPR, WNYC Public Radio, and Public Radio International.

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### JACK WATERLOT

**In This Issue:** Photographer, "Adam and the Angst," page 66

**Bio:** Paris native Jack Waterlot merges his taste for fashion with the world of celebrity and music. He creates imagery for a range of talent, from Hilary Rhoda to Sharon Stone, and has shot for *International Vogue*, *Interview*, *L'Officiel*, *L'Officiel Hommes*, *Flaunt*, and *DSection*. He splits his time between Los Angeles, New York City, London, and Paris.

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### PAUL FLYNN



**In This Issue:** Writer, "Best Years Ever," page 13

**Bio:** Paul Flynn is a London-based journalist and editor. He is a senior contributing editor at *Love* and *i-D*, features director of the menswear biannual *Man About Town*, a weekly columnist for *Grazia*, and a monthly

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## FEEDBACK

### Kit Harington Knows Plenty... Maybe

*Game of Thrones* megastar Kit Harington—known to many as Jon Snow—was the face of this year's Hot List Issue. *Socialite Life* praised William Van Meter's cover story for checking all the boxes:

It featured a brooding photo spread of Harington, the necessary acknowledgment of his stellar hair-game, and culturally relevant commentary on how men are treated in Hollywood. "With every photo shoot I ever go to, I'm told to take off my shirt, and I don't," said Harington, who spoke openly about being unnecessarily sexualized by the media.

"Yes, men are 'objectified' and 'sexualized'....but dude, it is *nothing* compared to what actresses get," *Socialite Life* wrote in response. *Celebitchy* agreed: "I'm kind of tired of Kit complaining about how crazy-famous he is and how everyone thinks he's the hottest. There's something humble-braggy about it."

*The Inquisitr* came to Harington's defense. "Would *Game of Thrones* fans react the same way if a female on the show stood up for being taken seriously?" It is an apt point we should all consider, though the news blog quickly undermined itself. "[Fans] all respect your performances, and love you for your mind. Really, they do—so you can take your shirt off now, okay?"

### When Our Editor in Chief Stirred the (Marinara) Pot

Aaron Hicklin took a certain risk in his editor's letter last issue when he challenged the LGBT community's reaction to anything that "falls foul of approved policy."

"I can't help feeling that our



### Jon Snow is not dead (yet)\*

In a show where everyone is expendable, *Game of Thrones* star Kit Harington has proven to be the ultimate survivor. But can he make it to the end?

By Kit Harington. Photograph by Nick Maitland. Styling by Nick Maitland.

\*Not a spoiler. Maybe.

8/1/15 11:11:11 AM

growing hysteria—the cry of the mob—is the sound of the formerly powerless fetishizing their victimhood," he wrote.

The letter, about the outsize reaction to an Indiana pizza parlor's antigay statement, landed on many blogs and Web sites—including *Slant* magazine's "Links for the Day"—and stirred readers' spirits. "I appreciate the callous way [Hicklin] forgets that many of us are not in cities that protect us from the tiniest of indignities," said Angel Chad-Maurice Brewer on Facebook. Anthony Rivera disagreed: "We should be picking our battles a little more wisely."

Reader Kiki Durkin provided a more nuanced reaction. "There is a good point here not to sweat the small stuff. But also, it should be emphasized that the media interpretation of any event is usually a lazy, knee-jerk sensationalist one far removed from any balanced reporting of the facts. The public voraciously consumes social media with little awareness or concern for how it is being manipulated."

### WRITE TO OUT

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# OUT

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## Obsessed: Our Current Fixations

### HEEL-ING POWER

# 21,847,750



The number of views that stiletto-wearing dancer **Yanis Marshall**'s most popular YouTube video, a choreographed Beyoncé medley, had received at press time. For more Yanis, go to page 56.

### QUOTED!

"She's incapable of not owning the scene she's in. I was a little nervous: *Is she going to be a horrible bitch, or is she going to be the sweetest woman on earth?* She was never a horrible bitch."

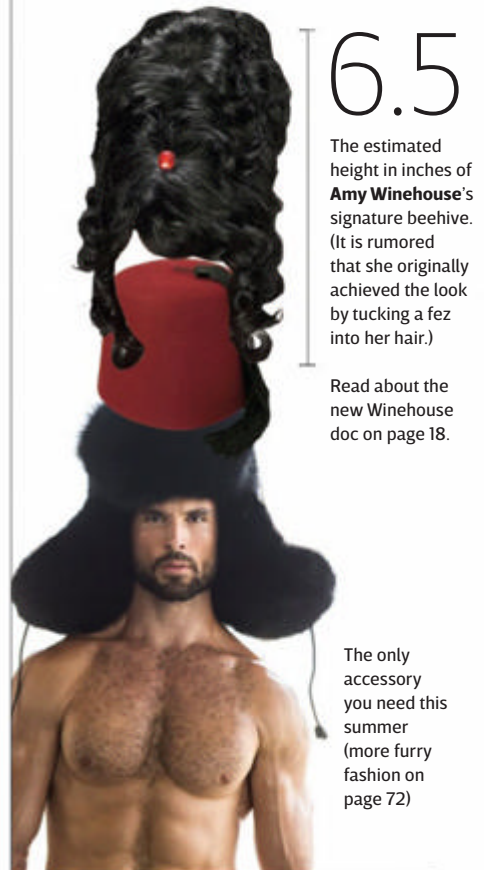
—**Judy Greer** on her *Grandma* co-star and on-screen ex, Lily Tomlin (more Greer on page 16)

### POP QUIZ!

We may be geeky editor types, but we're also sporty. Really! Match the *Out* staffer with his or her baseball walk-up music.

- |           |  |
|-----------|--|
| 1. James  | A. Stevie Nicks, "Stand Back"                    |
| 2. Matt   | B. Pink Floyd, "Another Brick in the Wall"       |
| 3. Julien | C. Deniece Williams, "Let's Hear It for the Boy" |
| 4. David  | D. Eurythmics, "Sweet Dreams (Are Made of This)" |
| 5. Jerry  | E. Nicki Minaj, "Win Again"                      |
| 6. Jason  | F. M.I.A., "Bad Girls"                           |
| 7. Kurt   | G. Beyoncé, "End of Time"                        |
| 8. Aaron  | H. The Soup Dragons, "I'm Free"                  |
| 9. Jesse  | I. Fleetwood Mac, "Tusk"                         |

### HIGH TIMES



6.5  
The estimated height in inches of **Amy Winehouse**'s signature beehive. (It is rumored that she originally achieved the look by tucking a fez into her hair.)

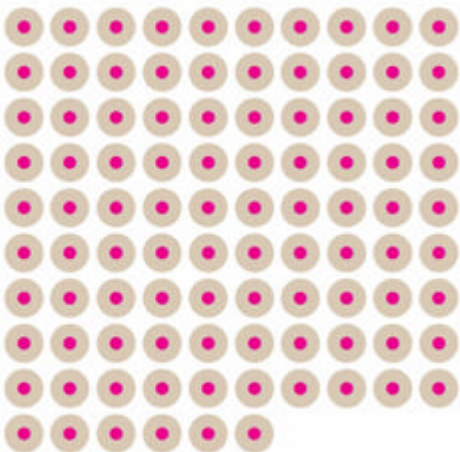
Read about the new Winehouse doc on page 18.

The only accessory you need this summer (more furry fashion on page 72)

### THIS ISSUE'S NIPPLE COUNT

96!!!

Thank you, CrossFit! (See page 50.)



### THE SO-GAY SOBRIQUETS DEPT.

## "Serena"

The nickname given to **Sir Ian McKellen** by Stephen Fry, a moniker that's been circulating in the LGBT community since McKellen was knighted in 1991.

More McKellen on page 16.

### THE TWEET LIFE

**@amyschumer** My siblings and I all suffer from a condition called "we just can't" referring to mostly every social interaction or any other interaction

**@billyeichner** I don't have any political issues I feel particularly strong about except for the fact that I fucking hate a street fair

**@bjnovak** How about you just assume I want tap water and if I want something fancy I'll specify

**@arnettwill (Will Arnett)** I live with the constant shame of not being addicted to a podcast

**@missjudygreer (Judy Greer)** Today all food is just a vehicle for Nutella to get into my mouth.

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No, but really. Keep in touch with us on Twitter.

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FOREGROUND



Breaking

# Best Years Ever

WITH GAY FRONTMAN OLLY ALEXANDER,  
YEARS & YEARS HITS POP'S SWEET SPOT.

BY PAUL FLYNN  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY PEROU

From left: Mikey Goldsworthy, Olly Alexander, and Emre Turkmen

**THREE HOURS BEFORE** he's due on-stage to headline the Paradiso in Amsterdam, Olly Alexander has a confession to make. "I miss my boyfriend," he says. "Really badly." Alexander is the frontman of the British pop trio Years & Years, and he's the charming, open type. "Thank God for FaceTime," he says. "It's the savior of relationships, I swear."

The last time Years & Years toured Europe was to support Sam Smith, the gentle giant who last year casually restructured the commercial consequences of coming out in the global music industry. "What's interesting about Sam," notes Alexander, "is that he lets people in. You can almost feel his audience on the journey with him, discovering the gay man he's going to be."

Alexander, 25, is a touch older than Smith, and noticeably more experienced. While realizing his teenage musical ambitions, he found early success as an actor. He's been directed by Gasper Noé and Belle and Sebastian's Stuart Murdoch, and he was a cutely conspicuous part of the British TV generational bellwether *Skins*. He's fully fluent in the language of the outré East London gay demimonde, which is populated by endless fashion superstars who have struggled to find a proper crossover pop figurehead—despite the valiant efforts of Bright Light Bright Light, Frankmusik, and Patrick Wolf. Alexander may be it. "That whole scene is free and creative and has a true relationship with the avant-garde," he says. "I'd love to be able to articulate what it does to you."

Alexander began talking publicly about his boyfriend as Years & Years' breakout hit "King"—an irrefutable burst of early-spring sunshine—hit hard on U.K. radio, and earned them their first number 1. "I enjoy talking about him," he says. "People said it would affect the way female fans treat you, but after touring with Sam, it was clear most of his fans were women anyway, and they weren't bothered in the slightest. There aren't many gay frontmen in bands, which I always find quite strange. What does it mean to be a gay musician today? These are things that I'm genuinely interested in finding out." Alexander's openness doesn't seem to have dented Years & Years' success so far. "We can't walk down the street in Poland," he



*"What does it mean to be a gay musician today? I'm genuinely interested in finding out."*

says, only half-joking.

Alexander's two musical henchmen, Mikey Goldsworthy and Emre Turkmen, have ideas as to what is attracting the group's fervent fan base. "Olly's someone who people like and remember," says Goldsworthy. "That's just happening on a bigger scale now with the band. He has a great pop sensibility, but he's warm, too. He sings about desire, sex, sadness. That's universal." Adds Turkmen, "These are subjects everyone can relate to. We straight people go through exactly the same ringer when it comes to trust, relationships, sex, and yearning."

The group met at a house party and dabbled in different soundscapes before settling on their subtly buoyant electropop. They sound a little like Hot Chip with the central heating turned on, or like a more candid Pet Shop Boys. Alexander's lyrics reveal first-person storytelling, not generic, crowd-pleasing clichés.

For Alexander, Goldsworthy, and Turkmen, harking back to the songwriting school of the '80s is an emotional pull, not a stylish affectation. "Pop music is meant to grab you," says Turkmen. "But

that doesn't mean it can't be unique. Olly's voice and words are amazing, sad, confessional. They touch people directly." But there is one downside to Alexander being so open, in song as in life. "No one asks *me* about my sexuality, and it's just as interesting," Turkmen says. "Honestly! But nobody gives a fuck." He laughs. "There were things that have made me feel just as much of an outsider as a teenager as Olly. When I was 10, I moved from a different country." His Turkish parents shifted the family to London. "It was a big deal at a tender age. It made me introspective and gave me the same strain of otherness that Olly and Mikey experienced in their own ways."

Alexander is perfectly aware of the conservative constraints wrapped around a nervous 21st-century music industry model. He intends to quietly defy them. "I know it's a small triumph, but I've got male pronouns into two of the songs on our album, *Communion*," he says. "We're only ever going to get one chance to make a debut album, and it has to be right. It has to be this. I couldn't be any prouder of it." ■



A photograph of two men standing on a beach. The man on the left is wearing a white button-down shirt and has his arm around the shoulder of the man on the right. The man on the right is wearing a blue V-neck shirt and is looking down with a smile. They are both smiling and appear to be enjoying the moment. The background is a bright, sunny beach scene.

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# THE GAY AGENDA

11 THINGS YOU SHOULD BE TALKING ABOUT RIGHT NOW



## 1. Ian McKellen, King of Summer

THE ACTING LEGEND DELIVERS HIS MEATIEST AND DISHIEST TURNS IN *MR. HOLMES* AND *VICIOUS*.

It may seem impossible that Ian McKellen, one of our finest living actors, has only now given the performance of his life, at 76. But that's the takeaway from Bill Condon's *Mr. Holmes*, a new film as beautiful for its floral motifs as its slowly unfurling narrative. If Benedict Cumberbatch is the definitive Sherlock in his youthful prime, McKellen is the embodiment of the sleuth in his 90s, when regret hangs heavy and a brilliant mind begins to cloud. In this golden-years tale, Holmes's forensic-style reads of people aren't what they used to be. Meanwhile, when evaluating himself, McKellen—who's never shown more vulnerability on screen—says he "isn't as sophisticated" as his roles make him seem.

Perhaps that misconception is partly what drew McKellen to *Vicious*, a delectable, frothy PBS sitcom that returns for its second season this month, and stars him and fellow gay legend Derek Jacobi as an aging, bickering couple. "The old cliché is that dying is easy but comedy is hard," he says. "And really, you can't do *Hamlet* if you can't manage some humor." For him, working on *Vicious* was a test. "It was nice to have the studio audience—you could tell when you were reaching people," McKellen says. "We got such a strong response that they didn't have to turn the laugh track up—they had to turn it down." **R. KURT OSENLUND**

## 2. Robin Williams's *Boulevard of Found Dreams*

In his final film role, the late actor shines an empathetic light on the closeted.



*Boulevard* kicks off like a melancholic *Pretty Woman*. Driving at night, listless Nolan (Robin Williams) unwittingly picks up young hustler Leo (Roberto Aguirre), whom he nearly hits with his car. Nolan offers a ride, Leo offers sexual favors, and Nolan is as shocked as he is intrigued. Yet the film is a sexless exploration of sexual orientation. Nolan adopts a paternal role toward Leo, in return for the long-awaited reassurance that Nolan is indeed gay. Throughout *Boulevard*, one wonders if he ever would have

come out if he hadn't met Leo, or if he would've just stayed married to Joy (Kathy Baker). It feels like a privilege that Williams's final performance puts a face on a silently suffering subset of our community: men who struggle to be themselves after crafting a life they thought was mandatory. In a small way, Williams shows those men the light at tunnel's end. **RKO**



## 3. THE OTHER GREAT JUDY

In *Grandma*, Judy Greer plays the jilted lover of Lily Tomlin's steely title character. The actress says the film marks new territory, but Greer (known for *Jawbreaker*, *Arrested Development*, and this summer's *Jurassic World*) has been raising glasses with gays for years. **RKO**

**You've never played an LGBT character before, right?** I'm going to say you're right, but I might look back later and be like, "Oh, but I did do *that*." Though my role in *Grandma* is super "out," in terms of making out with a woman—which is awesome. Especially when the woman is Lily Tomlin.

### Were there any memorable scenes left on the cutting-room floor?

There's a part of the restaurant argument that got cut out. I start screaming at the top of my lungs to a customer, "Here's your hot sauce! Here's your hot sauce!" and I'm dumping hot sauce on her quesadillas. It got all over my fingers, and then I'd scratch my face and burn my eye. It was really fun.

### Perennial supporting actresses like you tend to have strong gay followings. Are you aware of that?

I don't know if I'm aware of that, but I am aware of my own gay fan base, and I have to say, it's the greatest. Y'all are so loyal. *Jawbreaker* became a gay cult classic, and because of it, I can go to any gay bar and not pay for a drink. So, thank you forever.



## 4. Julie Klausner, All the Rage

"TO SEE AN ANGRY, unpleasant woman and her angry, unpleasant gay friend on television is important," declares Julie Klausner. In her new Amy Poehler-produced Hulu series, *Difficult People*, she's just that type of woman, with her real-life BFF, the gloriously caustic Billy Eichner (*Billy on the Street*), playing her gay partner in snark. As the pair fume their way through social disasters with about as much aplomb as Larry David or Louis C.K., they're essentially portraying less successful versions of themselves.

"I think television is so exciting right now because of authenticity," says Klausner, a New York improv and standup comic most famous for her weekly interview podcast, *How Was Your Week?* and her dating memoir, *I Don't Care About Your Band*. Her new show, which she wrote, thrives on authenticity, as evidenced by her character Julie's dynamics with her devoted, NPR-producing boyfriend, Arthur (James Urbaniak). "I liked the opportunity to flip the *Everybody Loves Raymond* model of the understanding female partner of an impossible male lead on its head," she says.

This is epitomized by an episode in which Julie must persuade an uncomfortable Arthur to have a three-way with Julie and her high school crush. "I'm saying things like, 'You seem tense,' 'Should we take a shower together?' 'Do you have enough rosé?'" Klausner says. "I think a girl expressing that greedy sexuality as men have done for ages is pretty cool."

Ultimately, *Difficult People* flies because of Eichner and Klausner's camaraderie, which comes from a very real place. "It was important for me to write a representation of a gay man who wasn't the human equivalent of a small dog in a purse," Klausner says. "My best friend is gay, and he is the man in my life. Gay men are my heart." —MICHAEL MARTIN

STYLING BY MARC GEORGE. HAIR: KYLE MALONE AT EXCLUSIVE ARTISTS MANAGEMENT. MAKEUP: ANGELA DI CARLO. SHOT AT SID GOLD'S REQUEST ROOM, NYC



## 5. This Year's Raunchiest Reissue: *Smokey: How Far Will You Go?*

Discovering obscure queer artifacts is always fascinating, but few lost gems pack the wayward punch of the music on *Smokey: How Far Will You Go? The S&M Recordings, 1973–81*. An L.A.-based act, Smokey was the brainchild of producer EJ Emmons and singer John “Smokey” Condon, a Baltimore-bred pretty boy who spent his youth partying with the John Waters crowd. When their 1974 debut single, “Leather,” inspired by Smokey’s introduction to the New York leather scene, was deemed too gay for major labels, the pair started their own. Through S&M Records, they released a string of randy, unabashedly homoerotic tracks spanning rock, stoner funk, and disco, and now those songs, along with a handful of extras, have been assembled into one naughty, raucous collection. Whether you consider cuts like “Piss Slave”—a nine-minute dance odyssey complete with the line “I wanna be your toilet”—novelties or revolutionary will depend on your tastes. Yet there’s something commendable about these sleazy old tunes. Before punk, there was Smokey, defiantly strutting to the beat of their own drum, refusing to be anyone but themselves. **JASON LAMPHIER**



## 6. THE ACE INMATES OF *THE STANFORD PRISON EXPERIMENT*



Cheers to the casting team behind *The Stanford Prison Experiment*, who, rather than chasing the biggest names in young male Hollywood, shrewdly sought out its most talented. Based on an actual 1970s experiment, in which 24 college students inhabited a simulated prison as either inmate or guard, gay director Kyle Patrick Alvarez’s psychodrama is packed with familiar faces who may not sell out multiplexes but sell

every line they deliver. Its stars include Ezra Miller (*The Perks of Being a Wallflower*), Michael Angarano, Tye Sheridan, and Jack Kilmer, and in re-creating this story’s true, torturous events (such as a *Deliverance*-style moment of forced faux-humping), these actors don’t just show the abuse that all men are capable of. More disturbingly, they convey that abuse is ultimately the most effective means of control. **R. KURT OSENLUND**

## 7. Amy Winehouse’s Legacy

A new film pays tribute to the late neo-soul singer.

Amy Winehouse never wanted to be famous. As we learn in *Amy*, Asif Kapadia’s electrifying new documentary, the highly gifted (and troubled) British soul singer thought her bluesy contralto would be perfect for divey jazz bars, and not much beyond that. Instead, she was signed by former Spice Girls manager Simon Fuller, and after the landslide success of her sophomore album, 2007’s *Back to Black*, she achieved icon status, winning five Grammy Awards. But with the accolades came tabloid scrutiny, and we know Winehouse’s fate all too well: After a long battle with addiction, she died from alcohol poisoning at the age of 27.

A film about the singer’s life was inevitable, and Kapadia does Winehouse justice, culling archival footage, home videos, and interviews with her loved ones (including her father and her notorious ex-husband Blake Fielder-Civil) to portray the tragic rise and fall of one of this century’s first great performers. In one moving scene, Winehouse nails the track “Back to Black” in a single brilliant studio take. It’s then that we realize the full extent of our loss, and we’re grateful to have a relic like this to remind us of what we had.

**JULIEN SAUVALLE**







## II.

### Big Freedia...

...twerking girl turned storyteller

In her new memoir, *God Save the Queen Diva* (Gallery Books, \$24.99), Big Freedia chronicles her transformation from Freddie, a “fat sissy” growing up in a bad neighborhood in New Orleans, to the twerking bounce sensation and reality TV star she is today. Whether detailing the highs (Freddie’s principal once called his mother to complain his hair was too tall and distracting) or the lows (the musician was trapped on a roof for two days during Hurricane Katrina), Freedia’s tales pop as much as the booty that made her famous. We checked in.

**JAMES MCDONALD**

**Your mother, Ms. V.—the “original queen diva”—once told you that hip-hop wasn’t a place for gay men. What do you make of that now?** It’s definitely changing. There’s a level of acceptance for gay people in hip-hop culture that just wasn’t there before. Tons of artists are reaching out to me now. And more are coming out, which is really changing things.

**If you’d had access to a book like this growing up, do you think it would have helped?** I think so, because back then there was no one to look up to. I had to do it on my own, teach myself how to think and act—I didn’t have the help kids have today. I wasn’t encouraged to see things in a different light.

**What advice would you give to a kid who gets picked on—who doesn’t fit in?** When I was small, I’d just flip it. People would call me names, and I would be so nice—that really messed them up. They’d be like, “Oh, you fat sissy,” and I’d just say, “Thank you!” with a nice, big smile and keep on going. A lot of times just killing people with kindness—that’s what you gotta do.

## 8-10.

### BOLD PRINTS

FROM UNDERGROUND PUNK TO NUDE BALLET, THE HOTTEST COFFEE TABLE BOOKS OF THE SUMMER

**Stephen Sprouse**  
*Xerox/Rock/Art*  
(Damiani, \$50)

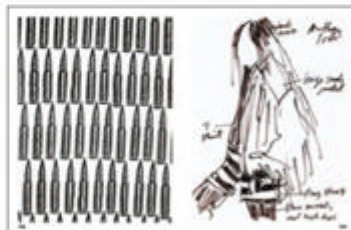
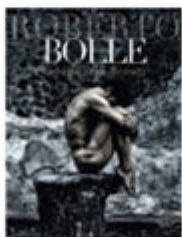
This glimpse into the creative process of fashion designer and graffiti artist Stephen Sprouse features original sketches, fabric swatches, color Xeroxes—and a foreword by his muse, Debbie Harry.

**Playground: Growing Up in the New York Underground**  
(Glitterati Incorporated, \$50)

New York’s 1970s glam and punk scenes are captured through the lens of a teenage Paul Zone, who candidly shot the likes of Lou Reed, Blondie, and trans singer Jayne County during his outings to CBGB and Club 82.

**Roberto Bolle: Voyage Into Beauty**  
(Rizzoli, \$65)

The Italian ballet dancer delivers a visual ode to his homeland, posing (and pirouetting) in various states of undress among the ruins of Pompeii and Rome’s Colosseum. *Bravissimo.*



## What is STRIBILD?

STRIBILD is a prescription medicine used to treat HIV-1 in adults who have never taken HIV-1 medicines before. STRIBILD can also replace current HIV-1 medicines for some adults who have an undetectable viral load (less than 50 copies/mL of virus in their blood) and whose healthcare provider determines that they meet certain other requirements. STRIBILD combines 4 medicines into 1 pill to be taken once a day with food. STRIBILD is a complete single tablet regimen and should not be used with other HIV-1 medicines.

**STRIBILD does not cure HIV-1 infection or AIDS.** To control HIV-1 infection and decrease HIV-related illnesses you must keep taking STRIBILD. Ask your healthcare provider if you have questions about how to reduce the risk of passing HIV-1 to others. Always practice safer sex and use condoms to lower the chance of sexual contact with body fluids. Never reuse or share needles or other items that have body fluids on them.

## IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION

### What is the most important information I should know about STRIBILD?

STRIBILD can cause serious side effects:

- **Build-up of an acid in your blood (lactic acidosis),** which is a serious medical emergency. Symptoms of lactic acidosis include feeling very weak or tired, unusual (not normal) muscle pain, trouble breathing, stomach pain with nausea or vomiting, feeling cold especially in your arms and legs, feeling dizzy or lightheaded, and/or a fast or irregular heartbeat.
- **Serious liver problems.** The liver may become large (hepatomegaly) and fatty (steatosis). Symptoms of liver problems include your skin or the white part of your eyes turns yellow (jaundice), dark “tea-colored” urine, light-colored bowel movements (stools), loss of appetite for several days or longer, nausea, and/or stomach pain.

- **You may be more likely to get lactic acidosis or serious liver problems** if you are female, very overweight (obese), or have been taking STRIBILD for a long time. In some cases, these serious conditions have led to death. Call your healthcare provider right away if you have any symptoms of these conditions.

- **Worsening of hepatitis B (HBV) infection.** If you also have HBV and stop taking STRIBILD, your hepatitis may suddenly get worse. Do not stop taking STRIBILD without first talking to your healthcare provider, as they will need to monitor your health. STRIBILD is not approved for the treatment of HBV.

### Who should not take STRIBILD?

Do not take STRIBILD if you:

- **Take a medicine that contains:** alfuzosin, dihydroergotamine, ergotamine, methylergonovine, cisapride, lovastatin, simvastatin, pimozide, sildenafil when used for lung problems (Revatio®), triazolam, oral midazolam, rifampin or the herbal supplement St. John’s wort.
- **For a list of brand names for these medicines,** please see the Brief Summary on the following pages.
- **Take any other medicines to treat HIV-1 infection,** or the medicine adefovir (Hepsera®).

### What are the other possible side effects of STRIBILD?

Serious side effects of STRIBILD may also include:

- **New or worse kidney problems, including kidney failure.** Your healthcare provider should do regular blood and urine tests to check your kidneys before and during treatment with STRIBILD. If you develop kidney problems, your healthcare provider may tell you to stop taking STRIBILD.
- **Bone problems,** including bone pain or bones getting soft or thin, which may lead to fractures. Your healthcare provider may do tests to check your bones.
- **Changes in body fat** can happen in people taking HIV-1 medicines.
- **Changes in your immune system.** Your immune system may get stronger and begin to fight infections.

Tell your healthcare provider if you have any new symptoms after you start taking STRIBILD.

**The most common side effects** of STRIBILD include nausea and diarrhea. Tell your healthcare provider if you have any side effects that bother you or don’t go away.

### What should I tell my healthcare provider before taking STRIBILD?


- **All your health problems.** Be sure to tell your healthcare provider if you have or had any kidney, bone, or liver problems, including hepatitis virus infection.
- **All the medicines you take,** including prescription and nonprescription medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements. STRIBILD may affect the way other medicines work, and other medicines may affect how STRIBILD works. Keep a list of all your medicines and show it to your healthcare provider and pharmacist. Do not start any new medicines while taking STRIBILD without first talking with your healthcare provider.
- **If you take hormone-based birth control** (pills, patches, rings, shots, etc).
- **If you take antacids.** Take antacids at least 2 hours before or after you take STRIBILD.
- **If you are pregnant** or plan to become pregnant. It is not known if STRIBILD can harm your unborn baby. Tell your healthcare provider if you become pregnant while taking STRIBILD.
- **If you are breastfeeding** (nursing) or plan to breastfeed. Do not breastfeed. HIV-1 can be passed to the baby in breast milk. Also, some medicines in STRIBILD can pass into breast milk, and it is not known if this can harm the baby.

**You are encouraged to report negative side effects of prescription drugs to the FDA. Visit [www.fda.gov/medwatch](http://www.fda.gov/medwatch), or call 1-800-FDA-1088.**

Please see Brief Summary of full Prescribing Information with **important warnings** on the following pages.

\*STRIBILD is a combination of the medicines TRUVADA (emtricitabine and tenofovir disoproxil fumarate), TYBOST (cobicistat), and VITEKTA (elvitegravir).





STRIBILD is a prescription medicine used to treat HIV-1 in adults who have never taken HIV-1 medicines before. STRIBILD can also replace current HIV-1 medicines for some adults who have an undetectable viral load (less than 50 copies/mL of virus in their blood) and whose healthcare provider determines that they meet certain other requirements. STRIBILD does not cure HIV-1 or AIDS.

# I started my personal revolution

Talk to your healthcare provider about HIV-1 treatment.

**STRIBILD** is a complete HIV-1 treatment in **1 pill, once a day** that combines the medicines in TRUVADA + TYBOST + VITEKTA.\*

Ask if it's right for you.

**STRIBILD®** 

elvitegravir 150mg/ cobicistat 150mg/ emtricitabine 200mg/ tenofovir disoproxil fumarate 300mg tablets

[www.STRIBILD.com](http://www.STRIBILD.com)

## Patient Information

### STRIBILD® (STRY-bild)

(elvitegravir 150 mg/cobicistat 150 mg/emtricitabine 200 mg/tenofovir disoproxil fumarate 300 mg) tablets

Brief summary of full Prescribing Information. For more information, please see the full Prescribing Information, including Patient Information.

### What is STRIBILD?

- **STRIBILD is a prescription medicine** used to treat HIV-1 in adults who have never taken HIV-1 medicines before. STRIBILD can also be used to replace current HIV-1 medicines for some adults who have an undetectable viral load (less than 50 copies/mL of virus in their blood), and have been on the same HIV-1 medicines for at least 6 months and have never failed past HIV-1 treatment, and whose healthcare provider determines that they meet certain other requirements.
- **STRIBILD is a complete HIV-1 medicine** and should not be used with any other HIV-1 medicines.
- **STRIBILD does not cure HIV-1 or AIDS.** You must stay on continuous HIV-1 therapy to control HIV-1 infection and decrease HIV-related illnesses.
- **Ask your healthcare provider about how to prevent passing HIV-1 to others.** Do not share or reuse needles, injection equipment, or personal items that can have blood or body fluids on them. Do not have sex without protection. Always practice safer sex by using a latex or polyurethane condom to lower the chance of sexual contact with semen, vaginal secretions, or blood.

### What is the most important information I should know about STRIBILD?

#### STRIBILD can cause serious side effects, including:

1. **Build-up of lactic acid in your blood (lactic acidosis).** Lactic acidosis can happen in some people who take STRIBILD or similar (nucleoside analogs) medicines. Lactic acidosis is a serious medical emergency that can lead to death. Lactic acidosis can be hard to identify early, because the symptoms could seem like symptoms of other health problems. **Call your healthcare provider right away if you get any of the following symptoms which could be signs of lactic acidosis:**

- feel very weak or tired
- have unusual (not normal) muscle pain
- have trouble breathing
- have stomach pain with nausea or vomiting
- feel cold, especially in your arms and legs
- feel dizzy or lightheaded
- have a fast or irregular heartbeat

2. **Severe liver problems.** Severe liver problems can happen in people who take STRIBILD. In some cases, these liver problems can lead to death. Your liver may become large (hepatomegaly) and you may develop fat in your liver (steatosis). **Call your healthcare provider right away if you get any of the following symptoms of liver problems:**

- your skin or the white part of your eyes turns yellow (jaundice)
- dark “tea-colored” urine
- light-colored bowel movements (stools)
- loss of appetite for several days or longer
- nausea
- stomach pain

**You may be more likely to get lactic acidosis or severe liver problems if you are female, very overweight (obese), or have been taking STRIBILD for a long time.**

3. **Worsening of Hepatitis B infection.** If you have hepatitis B virus (HBV) infection and take STRIBILD, your HBV may get worse (flare-up) if you stop taking STRIBILD. A “flare-up” is when your HBV infection suddenly returns in a worse way than before.

- Do not run out of STRIBILD. Refill your prescription or talk to your healthcare provider before your STRIBILD is all gone
- Do not stop taking STRIBILD without first talking to your healthcare provider
- If you stop taking STRIBILD, your healthcare provider will need to check your health often and do blood tests regularly for several months to check your HBV infection. Tell your healthcare provider about any new or unusual symptoms you may have after you stop taking STRIBILD

### Who should not take STRIBILD?

#### Do not take STRIBILD if you also take a medicine that contains:

- adefovir (Hepsera®)
- alfuzosin hydrochloride (Uroxatral®)
- cisapride (Propulsid®, Propulsid Quicksolv®)
- ergot-containing medicines, including: dihydroergotamine mesylate (D.H.E. 45®, Migranal®), ergotamine tartrate (Cafergot®, Migergot®, Ergostat®, Medihaler Ergotamine®, Wigraine®, Wigrettes®), and methylethylergonovine maleate (Ergotrate®, Methergine®)
- lovastatin (Advicor®, Altoprev®, Mevacor®)
- midazolam, when taken by mouth
- pimozide (Orap®)
- rifampin (Rifadin®, Rifamate®, Rifater®, Rimactane®)
- sildenafil (Revatio®), when used for treating lung problems
- simvastatin (Simcor®, Vytorin®, Zocor®)
- triazolam (Halcion®)
- the herb St. John’s wort

#### Do not take STRIBILD if you also take any other HIV-1 medicines, including:

- Other medicines that contain elvitegravir, cobicistat, emtricitabine, or tenofovir (Atripla®, Complera®, Emtriva®, Truvada®, Tybost®, Viread®, Vitekta®)
- Other medicines that contain lamivudine or ritonavir (Combivir®, Epivir® or Epivir-HBV®, Epzicom®, Kaletra®, Norvir®, Triumeq®, Trizivir®)

**STRIBILD is not for use in people who are less than 18 years old.**

### What are the possible side effects of STRIBILD?

#### STRIBILD may cause the following serious side effects:

- **See “What is the most important information I should know about STRIBILD?”**
- **New or worse kidney problems, including kidney failure.** Your healthcare provider should do blood and urine tests to check your kidneys before you start and while you are taking STRIBILD. Your healthcare provider may tell you to stop taking STRIBILD if you develop new or worse kidney problems.
- **Bone problems** can happen in some people who take STRIBILD. Bone problems include bone pain, softening or thinning (which may lead to fractures). Your healthcare provider may need to do tests to check your bones.
- **Changes in body fat** can happen in people who take HIV-1 medicine. These changes may include increased amount of fat in the upper back and neck (“buffalo hump”), breast, and around the middle of your body (trunk). Loss of fat from the legs, arms and face may also happen. The exact cause and long-term health effects of these conditions are not known.
- **Changes in your immune system** (Immune Reconstitution Syndrome) can happen when you start taking HIV-1 medicines. Your immune system may get stronger and begin to fight infections that have been hidden in your body for a long time. Tell your healthcare provider right away if you start having any new symptoms after starting your HIV-1 medicine.



**The most common side effects of STRIBILD include:**

- Nausea
- Diarrhea

**Tell your healthcare provider if you have any side effect that bothers you or that does not go away.**

- These are not all the possible side effects of STRIBILD. For more information, ask your healthcare provider.
- Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects. You may report side effects to FDA at 1-800-FDA-1088.

**What should I tell my healthcare provider before taking STRIBILD?**

**Tell your healthcare provider about all your medical conditions, including:**

- If you have or had any kidney, bone, or liver problems, including hepatitis B infection
- If you are pregnant or plan to become pregnant. It is not known if STRIBILD can harm your unborn baby. Tell your healthcare provider if you become pregnant while taking STRIBILD.
  - There is a pregnancy registry for women who take antiviral medicines during pregnancy. The purpose of this registry is to collect information about the health of you and your baby. Talk with your healthcare provider about how you can take part in this registry.
- If you are breastfeeding (nursing) or plan to breastfeed. Do not breastfeed if you take STRIBILD.
  - You should not breastfeed if you have HIV-1 because of the risk of passing HIV-1 to your baby.
  - Two of the medicines in STRIBILD can pass to your baby in your breast milk. It is not known if the other medicines in STRIBILD can pass into your breast milk.
  - Talk with your healthcare provider about the best way to feed your baby.

**Tell your healthcare provider about all the medicines you take, including prescription and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements:**

- STRIBILD may affect the way other medicines work, and other medicines may affect how STRIBILD works.
- Be sure to tell your healthcare provider if you take any of the following medicines:
  - Hormone-based birth control (pills, patches, rings, shots, etc)
  - Antacid medicines that contain aluminum, magnesium hydroxide, or calcium carbonate. Take antacids at least 2 hours before or after you take STRIBILD
  - Medicines to treat depression, organ transplant rejection, or high blood pressure
  - amiodarone (Cordarone®, Pacerone®)
  - atorvastatin (Lipitor®, Caduet®)
  - bepridil hydrochloride (Vasacor®, Bepadin®)
  - bosentan (Tracleer®)
  - buspirone
  - carbamazepine (Carbatrol®, Epitol®, Equetro®, Tegretol®)
  - clarithromycin (Biaxin®, Prevpac®)
  - clonazepam (Klonopin®)
  - clorazepate (Gen-xene®, Tranxene®)
  - colchicine (Colcryst®)
  - medicines that contain dexamethasone
  - diazepam (Valium®)
  - digoxin (Lanoxin®)

- disopyramide (Norpace®)
- estazolam
- ethosuximide (Zarontin®)
- flecainide (Tambocor®)
- flurazepam
- fluticasone (Flovent®, Flonase®, Flovent Diskus®, Flovent HFA®, Veramyst®)
- itraconazole (Sporanox®)
- ketoconazole (Nizoral®)
- lidocaine (Xylocaine®)
- mexiletine
- oxcarbazepine (Trileptal®)
- perphenazine
- phenobarbital (Luminal®)
- phenytoin (Dilantin®, Phenytek®)
- propafenone (Rythmol®)
- quinidine (Neudexta®)
- rifabutin (Mycobutin®)
- rifapentine (Priftin®)
- risperidone (Risperdal®, Risperdal Consta®)
- salmeterol (Serevent®) or salmeterol when taken in combination with fluticasone (Advair Diskus®, Advair HFA®)
- sildenafil (Viagra®), tadalafil (Cialis®) or vardenafil (Levitra®, Staxyn®), for the treatment of erectile dysfunction (ED). If you get dizzy or faint (low blood pressure), have vision changes or have an erection that last longer than 4 hours, call your healthcare provider or get medical help right away.
- tadalafil (Adcirca®), for the treatment of pulmonary arterial hypertension
- thioridazine
- voriconazole (Vfend®)
- warfarin (Coumadin®, Jantoven®)
- zolpidem (Ambien®, Edlular®, Intermezzo®, Zolpimist®)

**Know the medicines you take.** Keep a list of all your medicines and show it to your healthcare provider and pharmacist when you get a new medicine. Do not start any new medicines while you are taking STRIBILD without first talking with your healthcare provider.

**Keep STRIBILD and all medicines out of reach of children.**

This Brief Summary summarizes the most important information about STRIBILD. If you would like more information, talk with your healthcare provider. You can also ask your healthcare provider or pharmacist for information about STRIBILD that is written for health professionals, or call 1-800-445-3235 or go to [www.STRIBILD.com](http://www.STRIBILD.com).

Issued: December 2014



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Fung Tu's  
ricotta gnocchi



## THE RECIPE

Modern Chinese for the home wok

(Serves 4 as a main course)

2 lbs. wide rice noodles,  
cut into 1-inch strips  
2 links Mexican chorizo, taken  
out of the casing and broken  
up into pinky-nail-sized pieces  
4 rhubarb ribs, cut on  
a bias 2 mm thick  
4 celery ribs, cut on  
a bias 2 mm thick  
½ lb. soybean sprouts, washed  
3 tbsp. chili oil pulp  
2 tbsp. soy sauce  
3 tbsp. black vinegar

In a wok, heat 1 teaspoon of canola oil on high until it smokes. Add the chorizo. Add noodles after the chorizo is browned. Toss thoroughly. Add the rhubarb, celery, sprouts, and chili oil pulp. Season with soy sauce and black vinegar. Serve in a bowl, garnished with sliced scallion greens and cilantro.

# Chinese New Wave

Kung pao gets a much-needed kick.

**GO TO MOST** Chinese restaurants in the U.S., and you'll find slight variations on the old standbys. (How many different ways can someone interpret chicken and broccoli? Turns out, not a lot.) But with a new batch of chefs giving a modern spin to dishes we're used to consuming on our couches, it's looking like General Tso's reign may soon be over.

Jonathan Wu, who runs the hot spot **Fung Tu** ([FungTu.com](http://FungTu.com)) in New York City's Lower East Side, serves a menu he describes as "seasonal American Chinese." He makes tired staples fresh by channeling his upbringing. "It's an expression of my identity, my heritage, and Chinese culture, but I'm most definitely an American," he says of his egg roll stuffed with succulent pork belly, one of Fung Tu's signatures.

More than anything, it's Wu's time spent in the kitchens of restaurant royalty like Blue Hill and Per Se that allows his cross-cultural vision to succeed on the plate. The young talent coming out of lauded venues like these is the driving force behind Chinese cuisine's

renaissance. "There's a generation of chefs who've worked around fine dining, gained experience with techniques, and now have the opportunity to open their own places," says Wu.

That means the fried chicken at San Antonio's **Hot Joy** ([HotJoySA.com](http://HotJoySA.com)) is spiked with Sichuan peppercorns and chili oil; the dumplings at **Mimi Cheng's** ([MimiChengs.com](http://MimiChengs.com)) in Manhattan come filled with local baby bok choy; and the lines are out the door for the Kung Pao Pastrami at **Mission Chinese Food** ([MissionChineseFood.com](http://MissionChineseFood.com)) in San Fran and New York.

Sure, specials like Fung Tu's ricotta gnocchi (yes, gnocchi) are tasty. However, Wu thinks the major reason the New Chinese trend will soon make its way into takeout containers around the country is simple: It preserves old traditions while inventing new ones. "I didn't create it just to create it," Wu says of the menu at Fung Tu. "It's at once original and soulful. There are stories and connections throughout the cuisine."

—JEFFREY URQUHART



# THE LGBT CAREER FAIR



Friday, September 25, 2015  
10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Citi Executive Conference Center  
153 E 53 St, 14th Floor, NYC



## Companies

Get your company represented at the New York City area's largest LGBT career fair by emailing [lgbtcareerfair@gaycenter.org](mailto:lgbtcareerfair@gaycenter.org).



## Job Seekers

Register for free today at [gaycenter.org/lgbtcareerfair](http://gaycenter.org/lgbtcareerfair).

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TRANSGENDER COMMUNITY CENTER

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 208 W 13 St, New York, NY 10011  212.620.7310  [gaycenter.org](http://gaycenter.org)



## Sporty Spice

These days, talk around the office water cooler has shifted from “Where’s the post-work happy hour?” to “Where’s the post-work workout?” If exercise is such a key part of your daily health regimen, shouldn’t you put some more thought into the uniform you wear while doing it? This season, brands like Tommy Hilfiger and Calvin Klein join mainstays like Adidas and Reebok in fusing modern design, great fit, and inspiring colors and fabrics, giving your old sweat cutoffs a swift kick in the inseam. Best of all, these fresh looks will perfectly showcase the hard-earned results of all those sweaty routines.

And that way, everyone wins.

THIS PAGE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: TANK TOP BY **2XIST**, \$44; JACKET BY **ORIGINAL PENGUIN**, \$150; SHORTS BY **ADIDAS**, \$45; SHOES BY **REEBOK**, \$90  
TANK TOPS (LAYERED) BY **2XIST**, \$44 EACH; VEST BY **CALVIN KLEIN WHITE LABEL**, \$89.50; SHORTS BY **CALVIN KLEIN WHITE LABEL**, \$45; SHOES BY **REEBOK**, \$90  
JACKET BY **ADIDAS**, \$85; SWEATPANTS BY **ALTERNATIVE**, \$74  
OPPOSITE PAGE: SWEATSHIRT BY **TOMMY HILFIGER**, \$149.50; JACKET BY **LACOSTE**, \$155; SWEATPANTS BY **TOMMY HILFIGER**, \$99.50

MARKET EDITOR: MICHAEL COOK; GROOMER: ANGELA DI CARLO; MODEL: AUSTIN OTTO AT NEW YORK MODEL MANAGEMENT







## Two-Wheel Drive

Commutes are often synonymous with disgruntled straphangers, uncomfortably close quarters, or bumper-to-bumper nightmares. This summer, free yourself from the madness, grab your bike, and hit the road. Cycling has become more convenient with the advent of bike lanes and biker-friendly ordinances in cities across the nation. So while you're taking advantage of these initiatives, why not ride in style? Levi's Commuter collection focuses on both functionality and fashion, and a sturdy helmet (like the ones made by Bern) will keep your noggin safe. The time has come for you to ditch the lead foot in favor of some powerful, fashion-forward pedaling.



HELMET BY **BERN**, \$59.99; SWEATER BY **HERMÈS**, \$1,800; BICYCLE BY **SCHWINN**, \$550; *TOUR DE FRANCE SOUNDTRACKS* (2003) BY **KRAFTWERK**; T-SHIRT BY **LEVI'S COMMUTER**, \$38; BACKPACK BY **FJÄLLRÄVEN**, \$150; SWEATER BY **TOMMY HILFGER**, \$129; JEANS BY **LEVI'S COMMUTER**, \$88; JACKET BY **SUGOI**, \$150







## Dry Season

When you see movie superheroes save the world without breaking a sweat, it's all thanks to stunt actors like Bobby Holland Hanton, who's been a body double for every A-lister under the sun, from Chris Hemsworth in *Thor: The Dark World* to Jake Gyllenhaal in *Prince of Persia: The Sands of Time*. Here, his tips for staying cool (and fragrant) this summer. —JULIEN SAUVALLÉ

### START FRESH

"The most important thing is to keep your skin clean and hydrated," Hanton says. "It helps to use a shower gel with odor-blocking properties, like **Dove Men+Care Odor Guard Body and Face Wash** (18 oz., \$6.59). It lasts like a deodorant."

### TAME THE JUNGLE

"In my job, the last thing you want to hear from an actor is, 'I don't want to work with that guy because he smells.' " The best way to avoid being deemed the stinky dude? "I try to keep my armpits trimmed," says Hanton. "I use the **BaByliss Pro Rechargeable Trimmer** (\$69.99, available at Bed Bath and Beyond). The same goes for your man bits: Keep them tidy!"

### SPRAY IT, DON'T STAIN IT

"As a stunt actor, I'm on and off the set throughout the day, so I end up worrying about how I smell. My favorite deodorant is **Axe White Label Dry Spray Antiperspirant Air** (3.8 oz., \$6.99) because it dries fast, and I like its woody scent. If you must go for a stick, choose a clear gel deodorant. It's less likely to leave flakes or pit stains."

### THE SECRET WEAPON

One item Hanton always has in his kit bag? A small towel. "If you've applied deodorant and you're in a rush, dab your armpits lightly to avoid stains—especially if you have to put on a shirt or a T-shirt right away."

#CelibacyChallenge



The FDA's new policy bans gay and bisexual men from donating blood unless they stay celibate for a year. Go to [celibacychallenge.com](http://celibacychallenge.com) to sign our petition to change it.







## Putting on the Spritz

A sparkling summer classic makes a welcome return.

**FOR MOST OF US**, a spritz suggests Aunt Jan plunking ice cubes into her soda-lightened chardonnay while watching *Match Game*. But the spritz has a long, honorable history that's much more than caftans and key parties. Most important, it's the perfect thing to drink right now.

A traditional spritz is an Italian concoction that dates back to the 19th century. Composed of wine, a bitter liqueur (like Campari), and some bubbles, it makes for a nice aperitivo that energizes without slowing you down. As Talia Baiocchi, co-author of the upcoming book *Spritz*, explains, "That combination of bitter and bubbly goes back to Roman times—it's what our bellies want when we're thinking about going out to eat."

Even better, the spritz is eminently adaptable. As more bartenders stock their shelves with Italian amari and other esoteric liqueurs, they're looking to the spritz as a formula for experimentation. Natasha David, co-

owner of New York City's Nitecap, has dedicated an entire section of her whimsical cocktail menu to it. "I started drinking white-wine spritzes as a teenager with my mother," says David, "so I think I've always felt very nostalgic toward them. I've made it my goal in life to give the spritz its rightful, dignified place in cocktail culture." With creations like the sage-infused Jim Dear and Darling and the apple-bright Witching Hour, David's spritzes are dignified *and* delicious. Meanwhile, at Denver's swank Cooper Lounge, bar manager Marcel Templet uses a local sparkling muscat wine to make his Milano Spritzer. Balanced with the citrus notes of Amaro Ramazzotti, it's perfect before a night out on the town. As cocktail guru Greg Best, whose new bar is coming to Atlanta's Krog Street Market this fall, puts it: "Spritzes are the natural choice for a sophisticated yet playful low-octane cocktail. Even saying the word 'spritz' is refreshing."—**REGAN HOFMANN**

### TWO SPRITZES TO LIVEN UP YOUR NEXT BARBECUE

#### JIM DEAR AND DARLING

2 oz. dry white wine  
1 oz. sage-infused Carpano Bianco vermouth (or any other quality white vermouth)\*  
½ oz. lemon juice  
½ oz. honey syrup\*  
Club soda

Fill a large wine glass with ice. Add wine, vermouth, lemon juice, and honey syrup. Stir. Top with soda to taste and garnish with a lemon wheel and an orange crescent.

\*To make sage vermouth: Combine 1 bottle vermouth and about 20 sage leaves in a container and let sit for an hour. Strain, rebottle, and refrigerate. To make honey syrup: Combine 2 parts honey with 1 part water. Heat to dissolve the honey, then let cool and refrigerate. —From Natasha David, *Nitecap*, New York

#### MILANO SPRITZER

1 oz. Amaro Ramazzotti  
3 dashes Fee Brothers Black Walnut Bitters  
3 oz. Infinite Monkey Theorem Black Muscat (or a similar sparkling muscato)  
1 oz. club soda

Fill a tall Collins glass with ice. Add the amaro and bitters first, then top off with wine and soda. Lightly stir with a spoon or straw, and garnish with an orange twist. —From Marcel Templet, *the Cooper Lounge*, Denver



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## Mika's Paris

Since releasing his debut album, *Life in Cartoon Motion*, in 2007, Grammy nominee Mika has gone on to mentor aspiring pop stars as a judge on *X Factor Italy* and as a coach on *The Voice France*. The Lebanese-British singer (né Michael Holbrook Penniman) has also been trying his hand at fashion, having recently teamed up with Swatch to craft new designs for the watch brand. It's suitable, then, that as he promotes his latest record, *No Place in Heaven*, the au courant crooner is giving us a guided tour of one of the most stylish cities in the world: Paris.



La Réserve



Ma Cocotte

### CAFÉ DU TROCADÉRO

"I start off with breakfast here before my morning run towards the riverbank of the Seine." 8 Place du Trocadéro

### PONT ALEXANDRE III

"One of the world's most beautiful bridges. Cross the Seine and then go back down to the riverside and exercise on the open-air trapeze bars and jungle gym."

### MUSÉE DE LA CHASSE ET DE LA NATURE

"My favorite museum is full of natural artifacts and taxidermy, all in a stunning Haussmann building. It's like the palace of the rich uncle you wish you had." 62 Rue des Archives; [ChasseNature.org](http://ChasseNature.org)

### DEYROLLE

"This taxidermy shop is pretty amazing. It's where they filmed a lot of movies, including Woody Allen's *Midnight in Paris*." 46 Rue du Bac; [Deyrolle.com](http://Deyrolle.com)

### MA COCOTTE

"For lunch, go to this hip restaurant in the heart of the antique market. It's eclectic, and full of people who work and trade in the market. It's not just another tourist trap." 106 Rue des Rosiers, Saint-Ouen; [MaCocotte-LesPuces.com](http://MaCocotte-LesPuces.com)

### PALAIS-ROYAL AND CHANTAL THOMASS

"Check out the miniatures shop at the Palais-Royal and then the Chantal Thomass boutique. It's a magical place." 211 Rue Saint-Honoré; [ChantalThomass.com](http://ChantalThomass.com)

### AU PLAT D'ETAIN

"It's in the 6ème—one of the best areas of Paris—and it's among the most beautiful tiny-toy-soldier shops in the world." 16 Rue Guisarde; [AuPlatdEtain.com](http://AuPlatdEtain.com)

### PASSAGE DES PANORAMAS

"Truly remarkable in the evening. It used to have a few bad restaurants and a dingy-looking gay sauna/bathhouse. The bathhouse is still there, but also an Aladdin's cave of bars and hangouts. It has one of the best restaurants in Paris, Passage 53, where a young chef makes the finest French food with Japanese influence." 11 Boulevard Montmartre; [PassageDesPanoramas.fr](http://PassageDesPanoramas.fr)

### LA RÉSERVE

"If you can, sleep here. It's designed by Jacques Garcia, and in Pierre Cardin's former residence. It's expensive, but pretty amazing." 42 Avenue Gabriel; [LaReserve-Paris.com](http://LaReserve-Paris.com)



Deyrolle



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# Symposium

DISPATCHES FROM THE FRONTLINES OF CONTEMPORARY CULTURE



## The Battle to Replicate the Body's Most Complex Organ

MILITARY MONEY FOR PLASTIC SURGERY AND UROLOGY IS FUNDING INNOVATIONS IN GENITAL RECONSTRUCTION. BUT CAN THAT BENEFIT TRANSGENDER MEN?

By Angus Chen

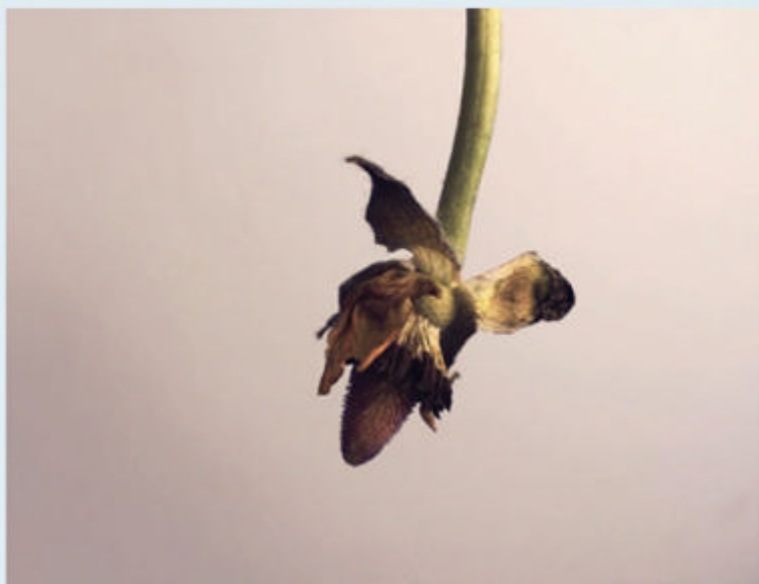
**ICHABOD CROWLEY INTENDS** to complete his physical transformation as soon as possible. In the coming years, he plans to continue with hormone therapy and proceed to the surgical removal of his breasts, as well as possibly altering his labia and masculinizing his clitoris. But when it comes to phalloplasty, the surgical fabrication of a new penis,

Crowley says, "I'm on the fence."

It isn't that he doesn't want a penis. For Crowley, a 29-year-old transgender man from Ohio, having a penis would be the holy grail of his transition. He says the main barriers to the surgery, aside from the \$80,000 price tag, are uncertainty about the results and the risk it involves.

Dr. Loren Schechter, a plastic surgeon

who has performed female-to-male confirmation surgeries for over a decade, estimates that complications, specifically with issues related to urination, can arise in 30% to 50% of cases. Even if all goes well, a sculpted phallus might be a far cry from a realistic penis. "If I end up looking at a little pink skin sock at my groin, not only may I feel incomplete, but



I'll think, *Oh my God, I'm mangled*," Crowley says.

Now that barrier might be eroding because of funding from an unlikely source. The United States Department of Defense has poured hundreds of millions of dollars into research on creating genitalia and looking for alternatives to phalloplasty. The military wants to heal warriors returning from Iraq and Afghanistan who suffer from grave genital injury. Modern body armor can keep soldiers alive in the face of an improvised explosive device by shielding their chests and abdomens. "Now you're seeing shifts of injuries toward extremities and genitalia," Schechter says. There are nearly 1,300 veterans who've returned from Iraq and Afghanistan with devastating injuries to their groin area and genitalia. Military doctors have called these some of the "most severe, destructive" injuries they've seen.

Aside from the severity of these injuries, it's just not easy to reconstruct a penis. A phalloplasty, Schechter says, is a more surgically complex operation than vaginal reconstruction. As the saying goes, it's harder to build a pole than dig a hole. Part of the reason for that is simple: Penises are bigger than clitorises.

When it comes to phalloplasty, Schechter says, "We need to bring in additional tissue." Surgeons harvest skin from the mouth and the forearm, back, or thigh—doubling the risk of infection. The surgeon sculpts that tissue into a penis and connects nerves and blood vessels between the patient's groin and the new organ. Finally, the urethra needs to be extended through the penis as well, a delicate procedure that leads to the most common source of complications.

It takes more than one surgery to complete a phalloplasty, too. Alteration of the existing genitalia needs to happen first—things like removing the clitoral hood—before the penis can

***"It would be bad enough if you were a man and your dick broke during sex. What if you're a trans man and suddenly your dick explodes? Then what do you do?"***

be built. Finally, if a patient wants to use the penis for sex, surgeons install an erectile prosthesis that can pump the penis up. "No device will last forever," Schechter says, and these prostheses usually need to be replaced every five to 10 years.

Crowley says that's one of the most terrifying things about phalloplasty. He doesn't want to have to go through surgeries periodically throughout his life. And he says, "It would be bad enough if you were a man and your dick broke during sex. What if you're a trans man and suddenly your dick explodes? Then what do you do?" More surgeries.

So the military is throwing money at new methods that could cut down on those risks and give soldiers a whole organ. The biggest contender is in an experimental field called regenerative medicine: the lab-grown organ. Dr. Anthony Atala, the director of the Wake Forest Institute for Regenerative Medicine in Winston-Salem, N.C., started experimenting with bioengineered penises in 1992. Sixteen years later, his research started bearing fruit. His lab gave 12 rabbits lab-grown penises, and four of them made babies. Around the same time, the lab was successfully regenerating vaginas for four women—work that would show that bioengineered genitalia were a possibility for humans. Scientists are hoping to repeat the feat with a human penis.

The other option might be to transplant a penis the way a surgeon might transplant a heart or liver. This is relatively straightforward, but, apart from a recent, reportedly successful case in South Africa, it's only been attempted once. Chinese surgeons achieved the first penis transplant in 2006, but they had to remove it a couple of weeks later because the patient and his wife said the new penis was causing them too much psychological distress. Since the patient didn't have the organ for very long, it's hard to tell if any critical complications would have arisen over his lifetime.

"My personal feeling is that regenerative medicine will probably hold more promise than transplantation," says Schechter. There are two main issues with transplantation. There's the lack of a donor pool, and there's the risk of the patient's body attacking the foreign penis. Immunosuppressant drugs can lead to increased disease susceptibility, and over time to cancer or kidney or liver damage.

A lab-grown penis, Schechter says, skirts all these issues because tissues from the patient himself would seed the growth of the organ. So the patient's immune system won't look at the new penis and try to destroy it as foreign material, and the patient himself might feel a stronger connection to the new organ.

What's more, a phalloplasty is a sculpture; it's an imitation and not always a great one. A lab-grown penis would be real. It's almost the perfect solution.



Researchers looking into bioengineered penises haven't really begun thinking about how they might grow one for a trans male because, with current technology, it's impossible. People born with female bodies don't have penile erectile tissue cells, which scientists need from the patient if they're going to grow a complete, functioning penis in the lab. Mostly, lab-grown penises are being researched to heal trauma from injuries like the kind soldiers experience or cancer or birth defects.

Science might still find a way to grow penises for trans men, but it'll take many years—maybe many decades. Schechter says that at the very least, basic surgical techniques will continue to improve as doctors find better ways to connect tissues and nerves and increase sensitivity. The military medicine is helping with that. "But I don't see anything on the immediate horizon that will revolutionize it," he says, speaking of female-to-male confirmation surgery. "My guess is that over time, as we continue to expand our knowledge and understanding, techniques will improve."

But that might take too long for Ichabod Crowley. He wants to have these surgeries done in the next few years, if possible. Like many trans men he knows, he says he feels incomplete and abnormal without a penis. "There are times when I'll reach down, and it won't be there. I get very, very confused for about a minute until I go, *Oh, right.*"

Psychiatrists say "gender dysphoria" is the pain of being born in the wrong body. Crowley says that's the toughest part of his life. "I have PTSD. I have anxiety. I was physically, sexually, and mentally abused throughout my childhood. The pain I feel through dysphoria is worse than all of that. And there are a lot of transgender people who just end it."

Crowley says he probably would take the phalloplasty and the prosthesis, even with all of the risks and downsides, just to help with the pain and feel more whole. Having anything between his legs would make him feel better. "I know I just feel more confident when I go out and I have my packer on."

Crowley says he was at a local gay bar one evening. A man walked up to him and the owners and began lodging what he called a "formal complaint." Crowley recalls it all perfectly: "He goes, 'This is a men's gay bar. There are women here. There are lesbians at this gay bar.' " I just looked at him, and I pulled out my packer, and I waved it at him, and I went, 'Suck it.' I got a bit of a rap for that one..."

He trails off and laughs. It's not quite the same as an actual dick, and he knows it. He might not ever have anything more than a plastic packer in his pants, but he's holding on to hope that medical technology will one day make it possible for people like him to have real erectile tissue, real semen—a real penis to whip out as proof. ■



Clockwise from top: Charles Leslie's apartment; French academic drawing, Unknown; *Swimmer*, Gilbert Lewis

## INSIDE THE 'PHALLUS PALACE'

Once considered the gold standard of artistic achievement, the male nude has undergone a shift in perceptions—and that's partially our fault. Because of the visibility and power of the queer movement, it's difficult for many to look at male nudes without seeing anything but homoeroticism. In *The Art of Looking* (Bruno Gmünder), author Kevin Clarke examines this progression by analyzing the life and legacy of Charles Leslie, one of the key collectors who, for more than three decades, have supported artists who've made homoerotic work—especially through the times of the AIDS crisis. Many of Leslie's treasures have been amassed in his New York City SoHo apartment, known as "the phallus palace," with its hoard of artwork that includes crystal and ceramic penises and ancient Japanese dildos.

Clarke spent about two years on his book, and came to understand Leslie's triumph in political terms. "He is his apartment," Clarke explains. "And all these penises are gay history and liberation from the past 40 years." In one of the book's essays, curator and art historian Jonathan D. Katz agrees, calling Leslie one of the "most progressive activists in the art world." The man's obsession also led to the founding of the Leslie-Lohman Museum of Gay and Lesbian Art, the first of its kind in the world. As Katz boldly declares, it "constitutes the largest gift ever given to any LGBTQ cause...at any point in history." —Jerry Portwood



+ POSITIVE VOICES

## THE ILLUSIONIST

In his latest work, **Dale Peck** weaves previously published journalism and original recollections and essays into a powerful testament to his time in the trenches of the AIDS epidemic. Here he recalls his friendship with Derek, a man he considered “a more authentic version of myself,” although almost everything he knew about him would turn out to be false.

**I WAS A FOOT SOLDIER** in an army small enough that the generals and the grunts were in daily contact with each other—at its peak, there were perhaps a thousand people at ACT UP’s Monday-night meetings, and only one or two actions a year managed to get even half that many people on the streets. I’d say I was the equivalent of cannon fodder, but that’d push the metaphor into an uncomfortable place—the truth is, I had a better chance of surviving this war than far too many of my peers. Like a centurion quaking when

Caesar inspected the ranks, I stammered in the presence of Larry Kramer—the only man I have ever known whom I consider a hero—and felt blessed, anointed even, when he deigned to know my name. I make no claims for my time in ACT UP (or Queer Nation, or Pink Panthers, or WHAM!, or any of the other offshoots and unofficially affiliated groups that sprang up in the early ’90s). I wasn’t a founder or a leader. I had no ideas, did no heavy lifting, acquired no specialized knowledge, took no extreme risks, committed no felonies in



the name of civil disobedience (I was arrested three times, spent perhaps 12 hours total in jail, another couple in court; in all three instances I received an ACD, or adjournment in contemplation of dismissal, which is the judicial equivalent of a slap on the wrist, except there's no slap). All I did was give 30 or so hours of my time each week: in meetings and marches; at actions and demos; working phone trees; xeroxing and stapling flyers; assembling bleach kits for addicts to clean their works and exchanging new needles for used ones; patrolling the streets of the West Village to deter gay bashers. And I educated myself: For three or four years I read almost nothing that hadn't been published in the previous decade or been written by a gay man or lesbian or bisexual or transgender person—everything else lacked urgency to me, seemed so divorced from the present moment as to lack all meaning in a world that was being remade before my eyes, by a disease, and by the people fighting it. I was a body and a voice and, for the first and last time in my life, an unconflicted believer. If I go to my grave thinking that I never did anything more important than what I did in ACT UP when I was 22 and 23 and 24 years old—and so far nothing has come close—I will go to my grave happy, and proud.

When I think back to those days I think of Bob Rafsky (whose shattering eulogy at Mark Fisher's public funeral was resurrected in David France's *How to Survive a Plague*), gently coming on to me and then rejecting himself on my behalf so graciously that I felt like a better person. I think of a man I met at a porn theater known variously as the Bijou, Bijou 82, or Club 82. We fooled around for a bit but the chemistry was off, and as I excused myself from the booth he asked me slowly, in a thick Eastern European accent, "Are you HIV-positive, or HIV-negative?" I told him I was negative, and he gave me a nod that only a Slav could have pulled off without seeming creepy. "You're the lucky one," he said. My roommate put that on my 30th birthday cake a few months later. But above all I remember Derek Link. Of all the things I could tell you about him, the most relevant is that he was the first person I slept with who told me he was HIV-positive. He told me the night after we met, which is to say, the night after we had sex for the first time. That had been a Thursday, and I decided to skip work on Friday to hang out with him. We went out for breakfast at the old Odessa (I had French toast, he had pancakes). He said he had something to tell me and even as I guessed from his tone what it was he said: "I'm positive." I use quotation marks here because I know these were his actual words: I recorded them on a piece of yellow paper ripped from a legal pad that I later tucked into a new journal. I

was a sporadic journaler at best, usually starting one when I felt that something momentous had happened, and I knew that something momentous had happened here. Not that I had slept with an HIV-positive person, but that I had met someone great. Someone about whom I need manufacture none of my usual illusions to love. I already knew from ACT UP that Derek was a member of the inner circle of the Treatment and Data Committee, and that alone would have elevated him into an exalted position in my estimation. But it was what he had done before joining ACT UP that cemented my feelings for him. Or, rather, what had been done to him, because Derek, like me, had been a witness, a cog in a brutal adult machine, but unlike me he had not escaped unscathed—he had been gnashed and ground and all but chewed up in the machine's gears. So great was the psychic torment inflicted on him, and so complete was my identification with him, that 10 days after I met him I wrote in my new journal: "I know that I will write about us." We only hooked up for a few weeks but months later I was still writing, not because I was carrying the torch but because I was convinced that Derek was "a more authentic version of myself."

From that same journal, in an entry dated January 20, 1991:

*I haven't been really writing down what I know about Derek. I've concentrated instead on how I feel about him, and trusted that the mundane facts will remain in my memory. I feel a little guilty just contemplating reducing Derek to a list of historical facts that would begin: b. May 30, 1967; and therefore suggest the ending: d. \_\_\_\_\_, and I don't really want to think about how soon that date may come. But, for the record:*

## DEREK LINK

- b. May 30, 1967
- HIV diagnosis: sometime in the summer of '89, since he found out 2 months after graduating college when his best friend/sometime (or onetime) lover, Stephen, was diagnosed with PCP.
- Education: 7 years in English boarding school (11-18); 2 ½ @ Columbia, finishing up at Bard. BA in, I think, Art.
- Sex: Btw. 450–500 men. For the last 2 years, 50 men a year. Before that, 100. Likes bathhouses. Loves getting fucked, having cum on his face/in his mouth. Tells of groups of 8 or so boarding school kids taking turns tying one another to a wire box-spring and gang-banging the victim. Sexually active since 14. Out since 16.
- Before AIDS: Painting was his passion. I've never seen one. He doesn't have space or time for it now. Sculpture, though, and architecture, are his

**"So great was the psychic torment inflicted on him, and so complete was my identification with him, that 10 days after I met him I wrote in my new journal: 'I know that I will write about us.'"**



COMPLERA is a prescription medicine for adults who have never taken HIV-1 medicines before and who have no more than 100,000 copies/mL of virus in their blood. COMPLERA can also replace current HIV-1 medicines for some adults who have an undetectable viral load (less than 50 copies/mL) and whose healthcare provider determines that they meet certain other requirements. COMPLERA combines 3 medicines into 1 pill to be taken once a day with food. COMPLERA should not be used with other HIV-1 medicines.

Just the **one**  for me

**COMPLERA** is a complete HIV-1 treatment that combines the medicines in TRUVADA + EDURANT in only **1 pill a day**.\*

**Ask your healthcare provider if COMPLERA may be the one for you.**

\*COMPLERA is a combination of the medicines in TRUVADA (emtricitabine and tenofovir disoproxil fumarate) and EDURANT (rilpivirine).

Pill shown is not actual size.



## COMPLERA does not cure HIV-1 infection or AIDS.

To control HIV-1 infection and decrease HIV-related illnesses you must keep taking COMPLERA. Ask your healthcare provider if you have questions about how to reduce the risk of passing HIV-1 to others. Always practice safer sex and use condoms to lower the chance of sexual contact with body fluids. Never reuse or share needles or other items that have body fluids on them.

It is not known if COMPLERA is safe and effective in children under 18 years old.

## IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION

### What is the most important information I should know about COMPLERA?

COMPLERA can cause serious side effects:

- **Build-up of an acid in your blood (lactic acidosis)**, which is a serious medical emergency. Symptoms of lactic acidosis include feeling very weak or tired, unusual (not normal) muscle pain, trouble breathing, stomach pain with nausea or vomiting, feeling cold especially in your arms and legs, feeling dizzy or lightheaded, and/or a fast or irregular heartbeat.
- **Serious liver problems.** The liver may become large (hepatomegaly) and fatty (steatosis). Symptoms of liver problems include your skin or the white part of your eyes turns yellow (jaundice), dark “tea-colored” urine, light-colored bowel movements (stools), loss of appetite for several days or longer, nausea, and/or stomach pain.
- **You may be more likely to get lactic acidosis or serious liver problems** if you are female, very overweight (obese), or have been taking COMPLERA for a long time. In some cases, these serious conditions have led to death. Call your healthcare provider right away if you have any symptoms of these conditions.
- **Worsening of hepatitis B (HBV) infection.** If you also have HBV and stop taking COMPLERA, your hepatitis may suddenly get worse. Do not stop taking COMPLERA without first talking to your healthcare provider, as they will need to monitor your health. COMPLERA is not approved for the treatment of HBV.

### Who should not take COMPLERA?

Do not take COMPLERA if you:

- **Take a medicine that contains:** adefovir (Hepsera), lamivudine (Epivir-HBV), carbamazepine (Carbatrol, Equetro, Tegretol, Tegretol-XR, Teril, Eptol), oxcarbazepine (Trileptal), phenobarbital (Luminal), phenytoin (Dilantin, Dilantin-125, Phenytek), rifampin (Rifater, Rifamate, Rimactane, Rifadin), rifapentine (Priftin), dextansoprazole (Dexilant), esomeprazole (Nexium, Vimovo), lansoprazole (Prevacid), omeprazole (Prilosec, Zegerid), pantoprazole sodium (Protonix), rabeprazole (Aciphex), more than 1 dose of the steroid medicine dexamethasone or dexamethasone sodium phosphate, or the herbal supplement St. John’s wort.
- **Take any other medicines to treat HIV-1 infection**, unless recommended by your healthcare provider.

### What are the other possible side effects of COMPLERA?

Serious side effects of COMPLERA may also include:

- **Severe skin rash and allergic reactions.** Call your doctor right away if you get a rash. Some rashes and allergic reactions may need to be treated in a hospital. Stop taking COMPLERA and get medical help right away if you get a rash with any of the following symptoms: severe allergic reactions causing a swollen face, lips, mouth, tongue or throat which may lead to difficulty swallowing or breathing; mouth sores or blisters on your body; inflamed eye (conjunctivitis); fever, dark urine or pain on the right side of the stomach-area (abdominal pain).
- **New or worse kidney problems, including kidney failure.** Your healthcare provider should do blood tests to check your kidneys before starting treatment with COMPLERA. If you have had kidney problems, or take other medicines that may cause kidney problems, your healthcare provider may also check your kidneys during treatment with COMPLERA.

- **Depression or mood changes.** Tell your healthcare provider right away if you have any of the following symptoms: feeling sad or hopeless, feeling anxious or restless, have thoughts of hurting yourself (suicide) or have tried to hurt yourself.
- **Changes in liver enzymes:** People who have had hepatitis B or C, or who have had changes in their liver function tests in the past may have an increased risk for liver problems while taking COMPLERA. Some people without prior liver disease may also be at risk. Your healthcare provider may do tests to check your liver enzymes before and during treatment with COMPLERA.
- **Bone problems**, including bone pain or bones getting soft or thin, which may lead to fractures. Your healthcare provider may do tests to check your bones.
- **Changes in body fat** can happen in people taking HIV-1 medicines.
- **Changes in your immune system.** Your immune system may get stronger and begin to fight infections. Tell your healthcare provider if you have any new symptoms after you start taking COMPLERA.

The most common side effects of COMPLERA include trouble sleeping (insomnia), abnormal dreams, headache, dizziness, diarrhea, nausea, rash, tiredness, and depression. Other common side effects include vomiting, stomach pain or discomfort, skin discoloration (small spots or freckles), and pain. Tell your healthcare provider if you have any side effects that bother you or do not go away.

### What should I tell my healthcare provider before taking COMPLERA?

- **All your health problems.** Be sure to tell your healthcare provider if you have or had any kidney, mental health, bone, or liver problems, including hepatitis virus infection.
- **All the medicines you take**, including prescription and nonprescription medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements. COMPLERA may affect the way other medicines work, and other medicines may affect how COMPLERA works. Keep a list of all your medicines and show it to your healthcare provider and pharmacist. Do not start any new medicines while taking COMPLERA without first talking with your healthcare provider.
- **If you take rifabutin (Mycobutin).** Talk to your healthcare provider about the right amount of rilpivirine (Edurant) you should take.
- **If you take antacids.** Take antacids at least 2 hours before or at least 4 hours after you take COMPLERA.
- **If you take stomach acid blockers.** Take acid blockers at least 12 hours before or at least 4 hours after you take COMPLERA. Ask your healthcare provider if your acid blocker is okay to take, as some acid blockers should never be taken with COMPLERA.
- **If you are pregnant** or plan to become pregnant. It is not known if COMPLERA can harm your unborn baby. Tell your healthcare provider if you become pregnant while taking COMPLERA.
- **If you are breastfeeding** (nursing) or plan to breastfeed. Do not breastfeed. HIV-1 can be passed to the baby in breast milk. Also, some medicines in COMPLERA can pass into breast milk, and it is not known if this can harm the baby.

You are encouraged to report negative side effects of prescription drugs to the FDA. Visit [www.fda.gov/medwatch](http://www.fda.gov/medwatch), or call 1-800-FDA-1088.

Please see Brief Summary of full Prescribing Information with important warnings on the following pages.



**COMPLERA®**  
emtricitabine 200mg/rilpivirine 25mg/  
tenofovir disoproxil fumarate 300mg tablets



## Brief Summary of full Prescribing Information

### COMPLERA® (kom-PLUH-rah)

(emtricitabine 200 mg, rilpivirine 25 mg, tenofovir disoproxil fumarate 300 mg) tablets

Brief summary of full Prescribing Information. For more information, please see the full Prescribing Information, including Patient Information.

### What is COMPLERA?

- **COMPLERA is a prescription medicine** used as a complete HIV-1 treatment in one pill a day. COMPLERA is for adults who have never taken HIV-1 medicines before and who have no more than 100,000 copies/mL of virus in their blood (this is called ‘viral load’). Complera can also replace current HIV-1 medicines for some adults who have an undetectable viral load (less than 50 copies/mL) and whose healthcare provider determines that they meet certain other requirements.
- **COMPLERA is a complete HIV-1 medicine** and should not be used with any other HIV-1 medicines.
- **COMPLERA should always be taken with food.** A protein drink does not replace food.
- **COMPLERA does not cure HIV-1 or AIDS.** You must stay on continuous HIV-1 therapy to control HIV-1 infection and decrease HIV-related illnesses.
- **Ask your healthcare provider about how to prevent passing HIV-1 to others.** Do not share or reuse needles, injection equipment, or personal items that can have blood or body fluids on them. Do not have sex without protection. Always practice safer sex by using a latex or polyurethane condom to lower the chance of sexual contact with semen, vaginal secretions, or blood.

### What is the most important information I should know about COMPLERA?

#### COMPLERA can cause serious side effects, including:

- **Build-up of an acid in your blood (lactic acidosis).** Lactic acidosis can happen in some people who take COMPLERA or similar (nucleoside analogs) medicines. Lactic acidosis is a serious medical emergency that can lead to death. Lactic acidosis can be hard to identify early, because the symptoms could seem like symptoms of other health problems. **Call your healthcare provider right away if you get any of the following symptoms which could be signs of lactic acidosis:**
  - feel very weak or tired
  - have unusual (not normal) muscle pain
  - have trouble breathing
  - having stomach pain with nausea or vomiting
  - feel cold, especially in your arms and legs
  - feel dizzy or lightheaded
  - have a fast or irregular heartbeat
- **Severe liver problems.** Severe liver problems can happen in people who take COMPLERA. In some cases, these liver problems can lead to death. Your liver may become large (hepatomegaly) and you may develop fat in your liver (steatosis). **Call your healthcare provider right away if you get any of the following symptoms of liver problems:**
  - your skin or the white part of your eyes turns yellow (jaundice)
  - dark “tea-colored” urine
  - light-colored bowel movements (stools)
  - loss of appetite for several days or longer
  - nausea
  - stomach pain
- **You may be more likely to get lactic acidosis or severe liver problems if you are female, very overweight (obese), or have been taking COMPLERA for a long time.**

- **Worsening of Hepatitis B infection.** If you have hepatitis B virus (HBV) infection and take COMPLERA, your HBV may get worse (flare-up) if you stop taking COMPLERA. A “flare-up” is when your HBV infection suddenly returns in a worse way than before. COMPLERA is not approved for the treatment of HBV, so you must discuss your HBV with your healthcare provider.

- Do not run out of COMPLERA. Refill your prescription or talk to your healthcare provider before your COMPLERA is all gone.
- Do not stop taking COMPLERA without first talking to your healthcare provider.
- If you stop taking COMPLERA, your healthcare provider will need to check your health often and do blood tests regularly to check your HBV infection. Tell your healthcare provider about any new or unusual symptoms you may have after you stop taking COMPLERA.

### Who should not take COMPLERA?

#### Do not take COMPLERA if you also take any of the following medicines:

- **Medicines used for seizures:** carbamazepine (Carbatrol, Equetro, Tegretol, Tegretol-XR, Teril, Epitol); oxcarbazepine (Trileptal); phenobarbital (Luminal); phenytoin (Dilantin, Dilantin-125, Phenytek)
- **Medicines used for tuberculosis:** rifampin (Rifater, Rifamate, Rimactane, Rifadin); rifapentine (Priftin)
- **Certain medicines used to block stomach acid called proton pump inhibitors (PPIs):** dextlansoprazole (Dexilant); esomeprazole (Nexium, Vimovo); lansoprazole (Prevacid); omeprazole (Prilosec, Zegerid); pantoprazole sodium (Protonix); rabeprazole (Aciphex)
- **Certain steroid medicines:** More than 1 dose of dexamethasone or dexamethasone sodium phosphate
- **Certain herbal supplements:** St. John’s wort
- **Certain hepatitis medicines:** adefovir (Hepsera), lamivudine (Epivir-HBV)

#### Do not take COMPLERA if you also take any other HIV-1 medicines, including:

- Other medicines that contain emtricitabine or tenofovir (ATRIPLA, EMTRIVA, STRIBILD, TRUVADA, VIREAD)
  - Other medicines that contain lamivudine (Combivir, Epivir, Epzicom, Triumeq, Trizivir)
  - rilpivirine (Edurant), unless you are also taking rifabutin (Mycobutin)
- COMPLERA is not for use in people who are less than 18 years old.**

### What are the possible side effects of COMPLERA?

#### COMPLERA may cause the following serious side effects:

- **See “What is the most important information I should know about COMPLERA?”**
- **Severe skin rash and allergic reactions.** Skin rash is a common side effect of COMPLERA but it can also be serious. Call your doctor right away if you get a rash. In some cases, rash and allergic reaction may need to be treated in a hospital. Stop taking COMPLERA and call your doctor or get medical help right away if you get a rash with any of the following symptoms:
  - severe allergic reactions causing a swollen face, lips, mouth, tongue or throat, which may cause difficulty swallowing or breathing
  - mouth sores or blisters on your body
  - inflamed eye (conjunctivitis)
  - fever, dark urine or pain on the right side of the stomach-area (abdominal pain)
- **New or worse kidney problems, including kidney failure.** Your healthcare provider should do blood and urine tests to check your kidneys before you start and while you are taking COMPLERA. If you have had kidney problems in the past or need to take another medicine that can cause kidney problems, your healthcare provider may need to do blood tests to check your kidneys during your treatment with COMPLERA.



• **Depression or mood changes.** Tell your healthcare provider right away if you have any of the following symptoms:

- feeling sad or hopeless
- feeling anxious or restless
- have thoughts of hurting yourself (suicide) or have tried to hurt yourself

• **Change in liver enzymes.** People with a history of hepatitis B or C virus infection or who have certain liver enzyme changes may have an increased risk of developing new or worsening liver problems during treatment with COMPLERA. Liver problems can also happen during treatment with COMPLERA in people without a history of liver disease. Your healthcare provider may need to do tests to check your liver enzymes before and during treatment with COMPLERA.

• **Bone problems** can happen in some people who take COMPLERA. Bone problems include bone pain, softening or thinning (which may lead to fractures). Your healthcare provider may need to do tests to check your bones.

• **Changes in body fat** can happen in people taking HIV-1 medicine. These changes may include increased amount of fat in the upper back and neck (“buffalo hump”), breast, and around the main part of your body (trunk). Loss of fat from the legs, arms and face may also happen. The cause and long term health effect of these conditions are not known.

• **Changes in your immune system (Immune Reconstitution Syndrome)** can happen when you start taking HIV-1 medicines. Your immune system may get stronger and begin to fight infections that have been hidden in your body for a long time. Tell your healthcare provider if you start having any new symptoms after starting your HIV-1 medicine.

**The most common side effects of COMPLERA include:**

- Trouble sleeping (insomnia), abnormal dreams, headache, dizziness, diarrhea, nausea, rash, tiredness, depression

**Additional common side effects include:**

- Vomiting, stomach pain or discomfort, skin discoloration (small spots or freckles), pain

**Tell your healthcare provider if you have any side effect that bothers you or that does not go away.**

- These are not all the possible side effects of COMPLERA. For more information, ask your healthcare provider.
- Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects. You may report side effects to FDA at 1-800-FDA-1088.

**What should I tell my healthcare provider before taking COMPLERA?**

**Tell your healthcare provider about all your medical conditions, including:**

- If you have or had any kidney, mental health, bone, or liver problems, including hepatitis B or C infection.
- If you are pregnant or plan to become pregnant. It is not known if COMPLERA can harm your unborn child.
  - There is a pregnancy registry for women who take antiviral medicines during pregnancy. The purpose of this registry is to collect information about the health of you and your baby. Talk to your healthcare provider about how you can take part in this registry.
- If you are breastfeeding (nursing) or plan to breastfeed. Do not breastfeed if you take COMPLERA.
  - You should not breastfeed if you have HIV-1 because of the risk of passing HIV-1 to your baby.
  - Two of the medicines in COMPLERA can pass to your baby in your breast milk. It is not known if this could harm your baby.
  - Talk to your healthcare provider about the best way to feed your baby.

**Tell your healthcare provider about all the medicines you take, including prescription and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements:**

- COMPLERA may affect the way other medicines work, and other medicines may affect how COMPLERA works.
- If you take certain medicines with COMPLERA, the amount of COMPLERA in your body may be too low and it may not work to help control your HIV-1 infection. The HIV-1 virus in your body may become resistant to COMPLERA or other HIV-1 medicines that are like it.
- Be sure to tell your healthcare provider if you take any of the following medicines:
  - Rifabutin (Mycobutin), a medicine to treat some bacterial infections. Talk to your healthcare provider about the right amount of rilpivirine (Edurant) you should take.
  - Antacid medicines that contain aluminum, magnesium hydroxide, or calcium carbonate. Take antacids **at least 2 hours before or at least 4 hours after** you take COMPLERA.
  - Certain medicines to block the acid in your stomach, including cimetidine (Tagamet), famotidine (Pepcid), nizatidine (Axid), or ranitidine hydrochloride (Zantac). Take the acid blocker **at least 12 hours before or at least 4 hours after** you take COMPLERA. Some acid blocking medicines should never be taken with COMPLERA (see “Who should not take COMPLERA?” for a list of these medicines).
  - Medicines that can affect how your kidneys work, including acyclovir (Zovirax), cidofovir (Vistide), ganciclovir (Cytovene IV, Vitrasert), valacyclovir (Valtrex), and valganciclovir (Valcyte).
  - clarithromycin (Biaxin)
  - erythromycin (E-Mycin, Eryc, Ery-Tab, PCE, Pediazole, Ilosone)
  - fluconazole (Diflucan)
  - itraconazole (Sporanox)
  - ketoconazole (Nizoral)
  - methadone (Dolophine)
  - posaconazole (Noxafil)
  - telithromycin (Ketek)
  - voriconazole (Vfend)

**Know the medicines you take.** Keep a list of all your medicines and show it to your healthcare provider and pharmacist when you get a new medicine. Do not start any new medicines while you are taking COMPLERA without first talking with your healthcare provider.

**Keep COMPLERA and all medicines out of reach of children.**

This Brief Summary summarizes the most important information about COMPLERA. If you would like more information, talk with your healthcare provider. You can also ask your healthcare provider or pharmacist for information about COMPLERA that is written for health professionals, or call 1-800-445-3235 or go to [www.COMPLERA.com](http://www.COMPLERA.com).

Revised: May 2015



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**“Every last detail—save, perhaps, his name—was a fabrication, invented for who knows what reason and perpetuated with some major or minor variations not just with me but with all of ACT UP.”**

*2 favorite art forms, though he doesn't practice them, because they are 3-D, and therefore a tangible, unavoidable part of reality. He also played in an all-gay boy hardcore band (w/ Stephen).*

*• He was bashed in Boston in '89. He could've died; his lungs filled up with blood. 4 boys beat him with sticks. None saw jail. He was awarded \$20,000 in damages to be paid in installments. The 1st is 2 months late.*

*• Some work: He gave private art lessons to rich kids. \$65/hour, 10 kids a week. Also painted their portraits: \$5,000 a pop. A lot of this money paid for Stephen's health care. He's got plenty in the bank too.*

*• Family: Jewish (changed name from Linkowitz). Father's side has big \$. Great-uncle converted to Catholicism and endowed the George Link Pavilion in St. Vincent's. Dad sits on the board of some big company.*

His mother, he told me the second day we were together, had been a Holocaust refugee, fleeing Germany as a little girl and taking up residence in England. She moved to the States and married Derek's father, who was a businessman based in Chicago, while Mrs. Link taught French at Tulane. It was a stuffy family dynamic. Derek was mostly raised by nannies and only saw his mother an hour a day, right before bedtime—from an early age she insisted he only speak to her in French so that he would learn the language. His father came to New Orleans on the weekends, and the family had at least one formal meal together, served by the maid. Derek recounted his week during soup or salad, his mother during the main course, his father during dessert and coffee (to this day, Derek told me, the sight of a waiter approaching the table to clear it makes him talk faster). Boarding school in England seemed like an idyll at first, *Lord of the Flies* meets the video for “Total Eclipse of the Heart,” but at 15 or 16 or maybe 17 Derek had what was in effect a nervous breakdown, and eventually refused to leave his room. The school contacted his parents but they refused to come get their son, and after it became clear that they weren't bluffing the school had no choice but to put Derek in a mental institution, where, doped up on Thorazine, he lingered for nine months. Eventually Derek's maternal grandmother, who still lived in England, took him in, but Derek ran away and soon enough was hustling on the streets of London, which was probably when he was infected. After a year and a half of this he sent a set of faked A levels to Columbia University and, when he was admitted, guilted his parents into paying for it. He did two and a half years at Columbia, then transferred to Bard, where he

began hustling again, and after he graduated he moved to Boston to pursue a painting career. He'd had two solo shows and one group exhibition, or one solo show and two group exhibitions, and played in a punk band with three other gay boys, all of whom were fucking one another without condoms, when one of them, Stephen, was admitted to the hospital with pneumocystis pneumonia. The other members of the band got tested, which is when Derek found out he was positive. After Stephen got out of the hospital, Derek took him to the gay bars in the South End, and on their way home they were bashed by the group of boys mentioned above. Stephen was still weak, and to give him a chance to get away Derek threw himself at the attackers, and ended up so badly beaten that he had to be hospitalized for two months, with, among other things, a collapsed lung. Stephen died less than two years after he first fell ill, at which point Derek gave up painting to become a full-time activist.

He still carried Stephen's driver's license at the time we met. I saw it. I held it in my hands. I noted the familial resemblance between Stephen and Derek and the gleam that came into his voice when he looked at the picture, which makes it that much harder for me to believe that everything I've just told you is a lie. The Judaism—the Holocaust—the move to England and the nervous breakdown, the time spent in a mental institution and hustling on the streets, and above all the HIV infection: Every last detail—save, perhaps, his name—was a fabrication, invented for who knows what reason and perpetuated with some major or minor variations not just with me but with all of ACT UP, right down to a supposed outbreak of Kaposi's sarcoma—on his genitals, so that he wouldn't have to show anyone. Yet despite the enormous psychic energy it must have taken to maintain this pose for, what, five years? Seven? Derek was also one of the nine or 10 most important AIDS activists in the United States. He smuggled unapproved medications into the country for PWA buyers clubs, discovered \$50 million in unspent federal money that was subsequently poured into AIDS research, and, after taking a job at Gay Men's Health Crisis, became one of the chief lobbyists and architects for what eventually became ADAP, the AIDS Drug Assistance Program, without which tens of thousands of New Yorkers, including many of my friends, could not afford their meds.

I say he did all these things despite the energy it must have taken to maintain his assumed identity, although I wonder if it should be because. Because no matter how urgent the task, the kind of work that Derek and the other members of T&D and TAG (Treatment Action Group) did was, from any rational point of view, impossible. They



Left: Dale Peck makes out with men; right: Derek Link shown in David France's film, *How to Survive a Plague*

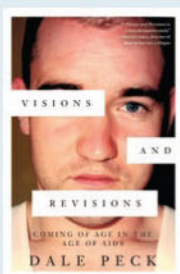


were artists mostly, a few guppies, a few people like Derek too young to be anything yet. None of them had a medical background, and while they were trying to earn a living and trying to stay alive they were also giving themselves a crash course in virology and epidemiology and bureaucracy at the city, state, national, and international levels, and while they were educating themselves they were also taking on doctors, hospitals, pharmaceutical companies and insurance companies, the New York Stock Exchange and the National Institute of Allergies and Infectious Diseases and the Centers for Disease Control and the House of Representatives and the Senate and three successive presidents, and, with the help of a few thousand legmen, they won. They changed the way AIDS was talked about, the way it was studied, and, most importantly, the way it was treated, and they did it all without giving in to despair or anomie, to the crazy-making frustration that any engagement with the health care bureaucracy is bound to engender, although in their case the frustration was magnified to an existential level and manifested itself as terror and rage. And they didn't give in to that terror either, or the rage. David Wojnarowicz's fantasy of shooting politicians with syringes filled with HIV-positive blood remained a fantasy, though whether that fantasy was a greater goad to politicians or AIDS activists is hard to say.

To suggest, however, that most of the members of T&D and TAG did what they did because they were HIV-positive is to forget that thousands upon thousands of HIV-positive people, many of whom

were financially or educationally better suited for the task, did not fight in the same way, or at all. What I mean is, I don't believe it was empirically necessary for Derek to adopt the identity of an HIV-positive person in order to become the kind of AIDS activist he became. But he did, and he immersed himself in his role to such a degree that he put himself at risk of actually seroconverting. One of the great pleasures of our sex was that I didn't have to take my dick out of his mouth before I came, could let go of that last little piece of self-consciousness that safe sex requires and immerse myself, in all senses of the word, in sexual abandon, and not come back to the real world until the sound of Derek slurping up the last drops of my jizz reached my ears. I don't know if he also engaged in unprotected anal intercourse, but the fact that he was willing to let a stranger come in his mouth suggests the degree to which he had subsumed himself in his adopted identity. Suggests that there was a deeper process of self-abnegation and -invention involved, something that went beyond AIDS or sexuality to the inescapable contingency of the self—of, to use Leo Bersani's term, *personhood*, the existential status “that the law needs in order to discipline us, and... to protect us.” I won't say that Derek wanted to opt out of that discipline, or that protection, but his relationship to it was obviously conflicted, as if he had internalized the “crisis of representation” Simon Watney detailed in *Policing Desire* and amplified it into an identity—as if he had come to believe that the only existence that had any meaning during

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*Visions and Revisions*  
by Dale Peck, Soho Press,  
April 2015



## I LOST IT AT THE BLACK PARTY

How a breakup, an open mind, and an infamous sex-charged party combined to change my perspectives

By R. Kurt Osenlund

**AT FIRST**, the Black Party feels like a horror movie. I'm ushered into a vast warehouse that's dark, barring the random shaft of blood-red neon light. Like the transgressive inverse of Catholic school students, the thousands of gay men that crisscross in front of me are mostly wearing the night's unofficial uniform of leather harnesses, which can be menacing to those not down with the fetish. The music, a perpetual, monotonous *unce-unce* of bass-heavy electronica, is occasionally streaked with a familiar cinematic sound effect—the kind that usually accompanies a serial killer stabbing a knife. I move in deeper, and I slip through the first of many partitions—vinyl meat-locker strip curtains—which are less ironic in that we fleshy men are being herded

in like cattle than they are evocative of scenes from *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*. Yet finally standing amid New York's biggest, most infamous circuit party isn't scary. The terror had come months before, when I'd first learned what the Black Party was, and decided, definitively, that there was no way I wasn't going.

**WHEN I HEARD** about the Black Party, from the loving handful of nightlife characters I'd newly befriended, my relationship of seven years was in shambles. I'd been hitting the club scene not only to broaden my world, but to escape my partner. These friends were shocked that I even had to ask what the Black Party was, but I'd spent nearly four years in New York—not to mention most of my 20s—in relatively sheltered monogamy, with little impulse to explore gay clubs, let alone all-night parties where men fuck in dark corners. My default mode, a mode my partner and I shared, was to express dread and disgust at the thought of such a party, as we were above such stereotype-perpetuating, sex-defined bullshit. But then this proud, post-gay millennial ditched his superiority complex.

One of the great things I've learned during the year and a half that I've been with this magazine is that, today, you can be any type of gay man you want—for instance, a man who helps to pilot a national publication while also occasionally dancing till 4 A.M. on Saturdays. It was growing increasingly clear that my partner and I were no longer interested in being the same type of gay man, and though I was still trying to figure out what type I was, I was hurling myself as far away from his supposed type as possible. The Black Party, which my friends described in deliciously unsettling terms (“You wouldn’t believe the smell,” one said), represented the ultimate, id-driven departure from my norm, which, for countless reasons that had nothing to do with dance floors or drink tickets, felt more alien by the day. I’d go. I’d look the part. I’d take drugs. Maybe I’d let someone touch me. Maybe I’d kiss someone. What I’d certainly do is step into the fray and see how I fared—on my terms. And write about it. If I’m being honest, I think I decided all of this before I knew that, by the time the date of the party came, the relationship would be over.

**I TAKE A MINUTE** on the main dance floor to inspect what’s on my person. In the pockets of my cutoff denim booty shorts (which I hadn’t worn since I dressed up as Kesha for Halloween years back), I have my ID, my MetroCard, two useless credit cards, cash, lip balm, my apartment keys, and two Molly pills I’d gotten from a friend. I don’t have my phone because it was collected at



the door, not far from a massive sign that read, NO UNAUTHORIZED ENTRY. On my feet are old skater sneakers I'll discard in a few days. On my back is a black tank top that I keep on for about 30 minutes until I feel like the outcast who didn't get the topless memo. All over my body, and in my hair, is black and silver glitter spray paint (the theme is "Mineshaft"), which will take me two hours to scrub off the next day, and which will still glisten in certain tile crevices in my bathroom for months. It's the most visible evidence of my go-all-out approach to this night. I'm here. I look the part. I have drugs. And a lot of people are already touching me.

As someone later suggests when I describe my experience, the Black Party—which, this year, relocated from Manhattan to Brooklyn—is a bit like Dante's *Inferno*. The further you proceed down its linear stretch of rooms, the more graphic it becomes. Initially, near the front, I only see about three guys fucking, not far from the bar where I buy the first of many overpriced Red Bulls ("the only thing that will be entering me at this party," I told my friends). But once I reach the back, and approach a room where countless men are getting off, I stick to the plan and push my limits.

I weave in and out of men bent over and men on their knees, and occasionally realize that the hands that brush my legs aren't hands at all. I move with purpose, so only my peripheral vision catches the twink slamming his face against a glory hole. At first, I'm very conscious of how I carry myself, and it reminds me of something I learned in an acting class—something that's also party decorum 101: Always have an objective. Even in this voyeur's mecca, don't spend too much time gazing at the line of men with their palms on the wall and their asses pushed out, invitingly. And don't stare too long at their pitching equivalents, either—tops seated side by side on actual park benches, stroking their dicks and waiting for partners as outdoor chess players would wait for opponents.

My objective becomes a sliver of space in the same room, blocked off by tall, black tarps. Behind the tarps, everything is pitch-dark. Passing through them seems like the ultimate test for the Black Party virgin, so of course I breathe and creep inside. Body bumps against body amid a soundtrack of phantom moans, and before long someone's hand is in my shorts. My moment of hesitation is quickly trumped by a sense of entitlement, and the thought that, as long as I'm safe, I deserve to get off at this party. In seconds, the guy is on his knees and I don't stop him. When he's finished, I give him a peck on the cheek and move on. A rite of passage.

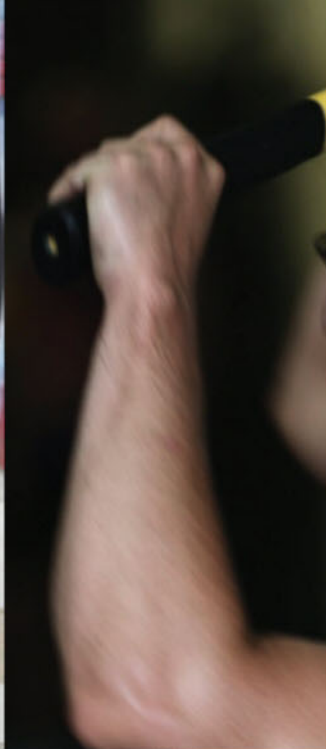
My knee-jerk judgment of my faceless pleasurer—which, per my norm, creeps up fast—is genuinely displaced by a certain camaraderie. We're both here to find release, so let him find his however he likes. I'm eventually shocked by how minimally judgmental I feel, and I don't think it has anything to do with the Molly, another first that merely makes me a more tireless, dance-hungry extrovert than I already am. I don't judge the bottoms in waiting or the glory hole twink. I might later tell friends about the batch of bears who claim a small dance floor as their sex bed, and who recall those sea iguanas that pile on top of each other in the Galápagos, but I don't judge them. And then, just when I'm feeling proud of myself, I get a real eye-opener from a Black Party veteran, who goes by Case and asks me why I'm here. Without thinking, I say it's because I'm an unlikely candidate. Without missing a beat, he firmly puts me in my place: "There's really no such thing."

Case's words ring truest after I randomly reconnect with John, a beautiful man whom I'd met just once before at a club, and who becomes my trusted dancing, kissing, and exploring buddy throughout the night. On a raised side catwalk where I give poppers a try (yet another first), John and I gaze out across a sea of dancing bodies, none of them easily reduced to being a likely candidate. Admittedly, I briefly wonder how necessary the Black Party is in 2015. Though planned as a spring bacchanal where sex is merely a component, it seems few would argue with the event's reputation as a gritty orgiastic bash. And considering that the days when gay men had only sex to define themselves—days for which I've also gained new respect—are long past, I wonder if the party is gathering glittery dust. But I'm grateful it's here. I wonder what, exactly, I would have said about someone like me a year ago—someone who mostly threw away caution and sought discovery at something like this. But I'm grateful I don't have to find out.

**AT 8 A.M., JOHN INVITES** me to go home with him and I quickly say yes. The morning light now creeping in through windows is making us feel like vampires, but the Black Party doesn't feel like a horror movie anymore. Not at all. It feels communal, even peaceful. The music sounds the same, but it's lost its vibe of malice. It's more like a comforting, metronomic hymn. Arm in arm and barely clothed, John and I are herded back out through the entrance, and I can't stop smiling. There are about a thousand reasons why, but if I have to choose one, it's that, while leaving what many would call the dirtiest party of the year, I'm feeling clean. ■

***“Body bumps against body amid a soundtrack of phantom moans, and before long someone’s hand is in my shorts. My moment of hesitation is quickly trumped by a sense of entitlement, and the thought that, as long as I’m safe, I deserve to get off at this party.”***









# MY MONTH OF HELL IN A GAY CROSSFIT CULT



By **Chadwick Moore**  
Photography by **Luke Austin**

## DAY 1

Coach Brad is a magnificent, roaring Clydesdale of a man, standing six-and-a-half feet tall, with blond hair, a golden complexion, and deep-set blue eyes. He speaks in a core-shaking baritone. His head looks like it ought to be atop a pedestal in the antiquities wing of the Met, where it could be quietly admired. His facial features are so architectural that I scribble in my notebook, "Looks part Klingon." Then Coach Brad slaps his hands together and booms: "Excellent! You should all be taking notes, like this guy!" I haven't a clue what he's been talking about for the past five minutes to our timid group of misshapen nerds, but have jotted down odd words like "burpee," "snatch," and "jumping squat."

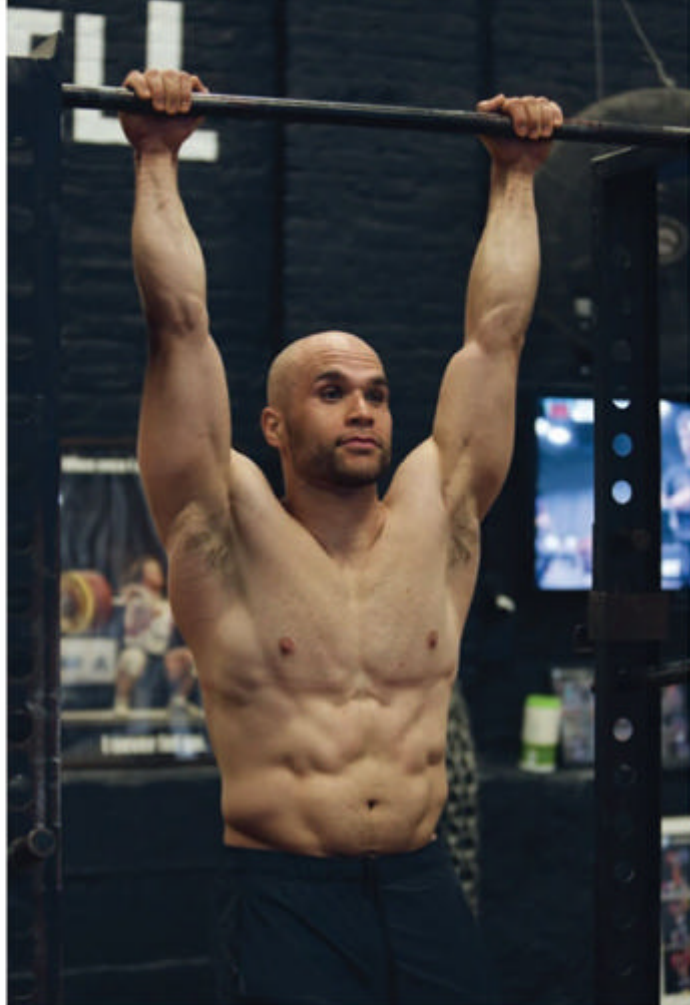
Each level of the Black Box, an open-floor-plan CrossFit gym in the Chelsea neighborhood in Manhattan, is divided into four "pods." Some CrossFitters from other gyms around the city criticize the Black Box for its factory-like atmosphere, where classes of different skill levels, with about 20 students each, stream in and out with blazing efficiency all day long, nearly every hour from about 5 A.M. until 8 at night.

On a recent Wednesday afternoon, about a half dozen of us are in the southwest pod of the second floor for Elements Class 1, our introduction to CrossFit. All around us there's a psychotic whirl of jump ropes slicing through the air, well-bred young women in yoga pants and ponytails swooping like orangutans along wooden rings suspended from the ceiling, and scores of people crawling guerrilla-style along the floor. The whole thing has a sort of Taylor Swift-meets-jihad feel.

Three days ago, when I set out to report on doing a month of CrossFit, I was put in touch with Craig Convissar, a 30-year-old attorney and one of CrossFit's biggest cheerleaders. We met at one of the Black Box's monthly LGBT workout classes that he helps organize. He's a self-appointed liaison between LGBT CrossFitters and the gym through a Facebook group called Black Box: Guerrilla Queer WOD (it has 229 members). He's also active in a citywide LGBT CrossFit community called OUTWOD. "WOD" is CrossFit jargon for "Workout of the Day" and is pronounced "wad."

"I've definitely gotten stronger, and my cardiovascular endurance has gotten way better," Convissar says. "I know I'm a much better athlete than I thought I was." He's been doing CrossFit for almost two years, and before that took trampoline classes and had been a member of a gym geared toward the musical theater community.

"I look at it this way: I have a share in the Pines with nine other boys. Most of them look better than me when they take their shirts off, but I know that in a physical fitness competition I could crush any of them," he says, which I find bizarre because it looks like he could club a seal with his biceps and deflect bullets with the pecs stretching out his CROSSFIT SOUTH BROOKLYN T-shirt.



He also has huge, bloody calluses on his hands. When I ask another CrossFitter, Steve, about his own scabby calluses, he says, "I guess I haven't found any lifting gloves that I really like yet," which I later learn is probably a lie. No one in CrossFit wears lifting gloves, because massive, disgusting, bloody hands are a sort of hanky code among members—a way to spot your own in society, as well as a badge of honor.

CrossFit gyms, in further parlance, are called "boxes." They are pared-down, bare-bones facilities that reflect the gritty CrossFit philosophy, which mixes Olympic weight lifting, calisthenics, and gymnastics with that eye-rolling paleo diet (what the cavemen would have eaten!)—heavy on meat and veggies and forbidding sugars, grains, and dairy.

After the gay workout, a guy named Jake invites a bunch of us to his rooftop around the corner for drinks. "If you're on the paleo diet, you can only drink wine and tequila," he explains.

Jake is one of the few not excessively cheerful people in CrossFit.

"I hate New York," he says. He's leaning against the ledge, watching airplanes fly northward along the West Side of Manhattan while his fellow CrossFitters gather in circles to talk about CrossFit. He has a hobby of memorizing flight paths and can identify aircraft from the ground, saying things like, "That's a US Airways Embraer 190, probably the 3 o'clock from Reagan to LaGuardia."

"CrossFit is designed for someone who doesn't have a life outside of CrossFit," Jake says. "All these guys have really drunk the Kool-Aid."

Steve, who does CrossFit six days a week on top of swimming and boxing classes at two other gyms, pipes up from several feet





away. “They actually didn’t drink Kool-Aid at Jonestown,” he says, referring to the 1978 mass cultic suicide of more than 900 people. “It was actually Flavor Aid.”

#### DAY 2

As part of our warm-up, we move back and forth across the pod several times, first like a crab, then like a bear, then like Frankenstein. Everyone looks completely stupid. It seems to me an exercise in humiliation designed to crush the ego and subjugate.

I spot Craig in the pod next door and flash him a big, dumb grin while waving exaggeratedly, but he only looks at me wide-eyed and gives a cryptic nod before darting away. It is sort of like the most popular girl in school being spotted by that differently abled girl she was nice to that one time.

#### DAY 5

One reserves CrossFit classes online, and although you can cancel up to an hour beforehand, you get penalized for no-shows. I find that going to class makes me angry. I despise doing activities in a group. I tend to think that even walking down the street with more than one other person is humiliating. My therapist used to say that anger is just depression turned outward. If I were still seeing him, he’d probably ask, “Where does all this anger come from when you have to go to CrossFit class, Chadwick?”

Judy’s here today. She’s got powerful hips and a sensible Tiger-mom shag and has a persnickety, forward-leaning manner of walking on the balls of her feet. Her gym attire is always spotless and overly appropriate, and we keep ending up in the same classes. Our coach today, Ted, is another remarkable specimen:

tall and broad with a great ginger beard, a Roman nose, and a man bun. He looks a bit like one of the sexier dwarves from the *Hobbit* movies. Along with kettlebell swings and jumping pull-ups, our workout today includes running a block down Sixth Avenue. Nine times.

“Ugh, I hate running,” Judy whines. “Do we really have to?”

“Let’s stick together,” I say to her. “I hate running, too.” But she looks at me as though I just ripped a fart in church. There’s a type of CrossFitter I’ve come to call the Seven-Foot-Tall Invincible White Man. Usually under 35, they work in finance and strut around the box topless, draped in sweat, with a maniacal 1,000-yard gaze, feeling very pleased with themselves. One passes by, and he’s got a tattoo of a black power fist stamped on the middle of his back, which I find hysterical. I point it out to Judy, but she moves to the other side of the huddle as Coach Ted goes through the workout.

A CrossFit gym opens somewhere on earth every few hours. In the 1990s, a personal trainer in Southern California named Greg Glassman kept getting kicked out of gyms for his unorthodox training philosophy. In 1995, he started his own operation in Santa Cruz, and in 2000, he founded CrossFit Inc. In 2009 there were around 1,000 CrossFit-affiliated gyms in the world; six years later that number is approaching 13,000 (for comparison, in 2014, the global number of Starbucks stores was 21,000). CrossFit claims between 2 million and 4 million members, with more than 100,000 “level 1 certificate holders” (trainers), according to Russell Berger, a spokesperson for CrossFit.

There is no board of directors at CrossFit Inc. Glassman owns 100% of the company and has been known to pop into affiliates across the country unannounced. CrossFit ruthlessly pursues



## NO ONE IN CROSSFIT WEARS LIFTING GLOVES, BECAUSE DISGUSTING, BLOODY HANDS ARE A SORT OF HANKY CODE AMONG MEMBERS—A WAY TO SPOT YOUR OWN IN SOCIETY.

make you better, to make you be what you're supposed to be, and you need me."

"In a cult, there is a mission," he continues, "whether it's world peace or spiritual enlightenment or whatever. Religions often have a mission—say, to build a community of the faithful who support each other and do good work. Well, if you look at the church [as being that], they are fulfilling their vision. When you look at a cult who say they're creating world peace, they're not creating world peace. They are, however, creating a very wealthy and powerful leader. That's the difference."

Contrary to popular belief, says Shaw, even everyday, healthy people are susceptible to getting involved in cults. "Everybody can be at some point in their life vulnerable to be lonely or frustrated or despairing or discouraged, and cults make tremendous promises," he says. "They're great advertisers. They offer solutions. They are friendly and they have communities."

### DAY 14

Today in CrossFit we learn the assisted handstand, the hollow position—essential for mastering gymnastics moves—and the double jump rope. Our WOD is "Fran," which Coach Ben says causes most people to puke the first time they do it. CrossFit celebrates vomit and blood. In fact, the corporate mascot is a homicidal-looking shirtless monstrosity called Pukie the Clown. WODs are named after women—Fran, Cindy, Mary, etc.—"because they're total bitches," Steve tells me.

We are also introduced to the fist bump, following a golf clap, between you and Coach. You then repeat those moves with the rest of the class upon successful completion of a move. It seems to shore up group solidarity.

Also, Judy saw me smoking outside class and acted as though she didn't know me. She was walking in behind a pair of Seven-Foot-Tall Invincible White Men.

I'm enjoying life inside the box slightly more. When we leave class tonight, it is the first warm evening of the impending summer season and New York is content and bathed in pastels, and I ride my bike back to Brooklyn. At a stoplight, watching the late-night shoppers on Broadway, I'm overcome with shame. I've always had a secret desire to be one of these high-functioning, Manhattan office worker types, the sort who flourish in CrossFit. It's the life I assumed I would have, but it doesn't seem to be turning out that way for me. I find those CrossFit gays to be generally warm and uncomplicated. They're nice people. And I want to be like that.

### DAY 15

I skip class to get drunk with my best friend, M. I tell him about these feelings and my growing body dysmorphia. I can't stand to look in the mirror without being critical. I tell him how self-conscious I'm becoming in the locker room at the box.

"Honey, none of those queens are judging your body," M. says, slamming down a tumbler of whiskey and puffing on a cigarette. "They're way too busy hating their own bodies to care about yours."

M. may have a point. I call up Alan Downs, a psychologist in Beverly Hills, who's the former CEO at Michael's House, an addic-

legal action not only against non-affiliated gyms for brand infringement, but against researchers who question the safety and effectiveness of the workout. The company has also been accused of retaliating for negative press coverage. Glassman has been quoted saying things like, "We're changing the world. We're doing all the right things for all the right people for all the right reasons," and "The strength and value of CrossFit lies entirely within our total dominance of other athletes, and this is a truth that cannot be divined through debate, only competition." In a recent interview with CBS News, a correspondent remarked that the way he talks about CrossFit sounds like preparation for war.

"Yeah, why not?" he said. "Getting ready for war, getting ready for [an] earthquake, getting ready for mugging, getting ready for the horrible news that you have leukemia. What awaits us all is [a] challenge, that's for sure."

I phone Daniel Shaw, a psychoanalyst in Manhattan and volunteer for the International Cultic Studies Association. He moderates a support group once a month for cult survivors, sees several former cult members in his private practice, and wrote the book *Traumatic Narcissism: Relational Systems of Subjugation*. He is also a former member of Siddha Yoga, which, in a 1994 *New Yorker* article, was exposed for widespread abuse and cultishness.

"At the head of [any cult] is a person whose narcissism has led them to believe they are superior to others and therefore entitled in ways that other people are not to control people," Shaw explains. "What they basically are saying is, because of my superiority, I and only I can give you what you need to fix you and



tion treatment center in Palm Springs, and the author of *The Velvet Rage*. Many of his clients are gay men in West Hollywood who are involved in fitness movements like CrossFit and Barry's Bootcamp.

"They earn you a kind of validation, and you begin to feel like the jocks in high school who were ridiculing you as a kid. They fill that very basic need to sit at the popular table," Downs explains. "There's a vulnerability in [gay men's] development that they really appeal to, that phenomenon of wanting to fit in and be with the other guys."

He adds, "Then that addiction, that obsession, starts in and you can't feel good about yourself unless you go, and you go once a day and then you start going twice a day and then you've really set these artificial standards. Doing these things doesn't satiate the hunger for validation. You feel *less than* even more so. Honestly, the guys who I see—who are the most depressed, even suicidal—are the ones who really struggle with this and have beautiful bodies. And yet it never measures up. They're never able to enjoy it as you think they would."

#### DAY 20

Craig has arranged a happy hour for some of the CrossFit gays at a bar in Chelsea. He shows up late, still in his lawyer suit, with that exasperated nervousness of someone who really needs a stiff drink after a long day. But he's not drinking, and I think he probably really needs a workout. A CrossFitter named Brian, whom I met on Jake's rooftop, approaches me.

"How's it been going?" he asks, beaming.

"It sucks," I say, but as the sparkle drains from Brian's face, I begin to feel bad. CrossFit is so important to him that I don't want to trash-talk it, so I backtrack. "It's just that I'm very competitive and I'm not good at it yet, and it upsets me because I'm not as

good as I want to be," I say.

"Oh my God, I'm the same way!" Brian says. "That just means you are perfect for CrossFit. That's the kind of person who really excels. Sounds like you drank the Kool-Aid!" The Kool-Aid joke is never far away with these guys. I wonder if members of real cults use it too. Like, *Look at sister wife Erma over there polishing those AK-47s. Boy, did she drink the Kool-Aid!*

#### LAST DAY

Coach Mike has us doing a solid 30 minutes of jumping squats, an Olympic weight-lifting move requiring you to elevate a barbell from the floor over your head and then do a squat. I was late to class, and Coach Mike called me out in front of everyone. My name was circled on the dry-erase board as a no-show. I'm paired with two straight guys, and I can't do the move at all.

"I don't want to see you squatting, Chadwick," Coach Mike calls out from across the pod. "You don't have the flexibility yet. Just practice the lift." And so I do, over and over, for 30 minutes. Even fucking Judy can do the jumping squat, with twice as much weight on the barbell as I have.

The two straight guys I'm teamed up with keep giving me pointers. "You think too much," one says. No shit. "Stop pausing when you bring the weight up—it's one swift move," the other says. They soon become so annoyed by me, they stop talking. Then, as the clock runs out, I hoist the barbell over my head, extend my hips back, and do a squat.

"Nice job, Chadwick," Coach Mike calls out. "You got it."

The two straight guys give me a fist bump, and Judy shoots me a thumbs-up. I step back, woozy, seeing spots, dripping in sweat. I am happy. ■

*\*All names have been changed except where full names are*





A man with long dark hair and a mustache is posing in a dynamic, slightly crouched position against a vibrant red brick wall. He is wearing a grey hoodie with the sleeves rolled up, a thick grey scarf, black shorts, grey socks, and black high-heeled ankle boots. His right hand is on his hip, and his left hand is near his knee. The title "Globe-Strutter" is overlaid in a large, white, serif font across the middle of the image.

# Globe-Strutter

*By R. Kurt Osenlund  
Photography by Winni Wintermeyer*





***Yanis Marshall broke out on YouTube and invaded living rooms on Britain's Got Talent. Now he's one of the world's most unique and sought-after choreographers.***



“C

ays! Lesbians! Bisexuals!”

It's late January, and Yanis Marshall is yelling from the front of a packed studio in Manhattan's Broadway Dance Center. For the past hour, a class of 75 has been listening to him sound off, shouting playfully—but with purpose—lyrics to “Fabulous, Baby!” the number from Broadway's *Sister Act* musical that he's chosen for today's choreography lesson. And he's ditched the filter and gone gleefully graphic too, as when certain dancers can't get their thrusts right. “Noooo, tighter!” the black-haired Frenchman barks with a grin. “Like there's a cock up your ass. Does that visual help?”

Loose, liberal, and transgressive talk is expected in a class taught by Marshall, the 25-year-old YouTube sensation. Since blowing up globally in 2013 as the queer European who dances in heels, he's made his name by bucking norms. And yet the seemingly random shout-out to gays, lesbians, and bisexuals is, ironically, the only line that seems to make the record skip. Evidently, the sold-out class is well-populated with all of the above, yet the demographic is hardly exclusive. Next to a six-foot-something, bleached-blond boy in pink suede platforms (a sort of Barbie-Ken hybrid), there's a sassy chick in leggings covered with planets and cats, and a T-shirt that reads SLUT CRACKER on the back. Sashaying past a young guy in blue wedges and a cutoff white shirt (the front reads KIKI; the back reads SPEAK WITH DISTINCTION) is a petite girl in a flannel top and black ankle boots who's getting off on merely watching herself in a mirrored pillar.

So, while the class might not be attracting every type of participant, in this environment where gender and orientation don't seem to matter a lick, why bother calling out the queers?

“I say it because if I don't, who's going to?” Marshall says later over coffee. “Nobody does that in dance classes. Usually you say ‘girls group’ or ‘boys group’ or ‘group one’ or ‘group two,’ and people come forward. I call out ‘gays, lesbians, and bisexuals,’ and *they* all come forward. One time I did this in Manchester and this 14-year-old boy came out of the closet by doing that. He was the last one to walk up, and everybody clapped. Before taking my class, he kept saying he was straight.”

In a few short years, Marshall has become a self-made and ravenously in-demand liberator, particularly, if not specifically, for dance-inclined gay men.

“I think he made it OK for me even to think of the idea of wearing heels in general,” says Eric, the student in the Kiki shirt with the wedges. “He made it OK not to be afraid to walk down the street in six-inch heels or go buy a pair of Jeffrey Campbells and run around your house in them. You can do it because he can do it.”

Marshall, who grew up in Vallauris (“a small, shit town near Cannes”), has always loved heels. “It's not just about the shoe,” he says. “It's also about what it represents. Men aren't supposed to wear them, and I love that. I'm a rebel. You say ‘no,’ I say ‘yes.’ I've always been like that with every-



one, even my mom. I'll ask, ‘Why not?’ and if, for me, your answer is not clear enough, then I will do it.”

Still, Marshall didn't actually dance in heels until 2011, when he advised a female cabaret act to use them in their performance, then accepted their challenge that he do the same. He came back, “killed it,” and started teaching a heels class in his native country, gaining a following before YouTube paved his runway to worldwide fame. It was June 2013 when Marshall dropped a video choreographed to a Spice Girls medley, wherein he and two close friends, Arnaud Boursain and Mehdi Mamane, strut around Paris in platforms to tunes like “Wannabe” and “Stop.”

“They started with me,” Marshall says of Boursain and Mamane. “They were maybe the first two men to take my class—the first two to wear heels, when everyone was still saying, ‘Oh, you look like a whore; this concept isn't going to work.’ They were always supporting me. We never





attempted to create a group—it just happened.” The trio released more videos, set to tracks by Britney and Beyoncé, and last year, *Britain’s Got Talent* came calling. Appearing on the show’s eighth season, which ran from April to June, Marshall, Boursain, and Mamine placed last among the finalists, but the fact that they didn’t win didn’t matter. “It was good publicity, and it was the first time they had three boys in heels, in England, on TV, at 7 P.M.—family time,” he says. “We danced to Scissor Sisters’ ‘Let’s Have a Kiki’ and Donna Summer and RuPaul and the Spice Girls and Beyoncé. We were seen by everybody on TV and got huge applause. I was like, *Fuck yeah, that’s exciting.*”

Marshall admits there was more strategy behind doing the show. As a man building his brand on YouTube, he saw that he had 300,000 subscribers versus *Britain’s Got Talent*’s 2 million. He also noticed that most of the show’s videos were hitting 10 million views online. As of press time,

Marshall has boosted his subscriber total to 818,000, and his total channel views to more than 100 million. A video of a Beyoncé medley that sees Marshall and his sidekicks in sickening unison (and that was released just a week after *Britain’s Got Talent* wrapped) has surpassed a whopping 21 million views on its own.

Altogether, the visibility has allowed Marshall to become highly discerning and pilot his own success. It’s allowed him to turn down “tacky” offers, such as appearing as a token gay instructor on an American reality show like *Dance Moms*. And while certain side projects are reportedly in the works, his increasing fame has allowed him to live full-time as a choreographer. When Marshall sat down for coffee in January, he was on a break from a three-month stint in Las Vegas, where he single-handedly recast and re-choreographed *Zumanity*, Cirque du Soleil’s sultriest resident show. *Zumanity* will bear his signature for the next decade,





**“I dance better with heels than without because when I have them on, I know I can’t fuck up. My body is in full mode not to fail.”**

and for the foreseeable future, Boursain will serve as the show’s dance captain (Mamine, meanwhile, is currently working in French TV). Before that, Marshall was teaching in Argentina, New York, Connecticut, Barcelona, Italy, Amsterdam, Germany, Portugal, Paris, and London. And all of that, according to him, was just in November.

“I live in an airport with suitcases,” he says.

Marshall can surely afford to fill those suitcases. He doesn’t disclose how much the last two-plus years of touring have put in the bank, only that the gig “pays so much, you have no idea.” He does say it’s given him the security to splurge on roughly 50 pairs of heels, from designers like Alexander McQueen, Louis Vuitton, and Christian Dior. He also admits he names them all. There’s a leather pair called Samantha and a pink pair named Mimi. But he’s not wearing

those beauties to work (“they’d get too fucked up”), nor is he wearing them—or anything else—when planning his routines. For a 90-second number to be taught in a 100-minute class, Marshall choreographs naked, for about two hours, usually around 3 A.M. He doesn’t give a reason why. But he implies that it’s all linked to being hyper in-tune with his body, which, despite the ostensible femininity of twerking, whipping his arms, and achieving stunningly high kicks, is notable for staunch precision and musculature—things many would probably categorize as masculine.

And once the heels go on, all that registers to Marshall is power. He’s still turned on by their rebellious symbolism, but there’s more to it than that. “I dance better with heels than without because when I have them on, I know I can’t fuck up,” he says. “My body is in full mode not to fail. You have your whole balance to deal with, and you’re always afraid to fall. Everything changes.”

Of course, Marshall is by no means the first man to dance in heels, and it’s possible that Eric, the 23-year-old with the wedges, isn’t aware of the influence of someone like Jonte’ Moaning, who was also present for Marshall’s January class,





and who's been rocking stilettos for years as a dancer, singer, and choreographer for the likes of Beyoncé. But because of social media's viral power, Marshall is the first man to bring all-gender heel dancing to such a massive global audience. Literally. At the worldwide schools and studios he visits (invariably by invitation), he's seeing how all types of people are receiving his masc-femme, bitch-but, stomp-and-strut brand of body movement. And it's catching on.

"In the last year of me touring, all I can see are these dance studios that have added a new class to their schedule—a heels class," says Marshall, who is now booked through June of 2016. "They didn't have that two years ago. It's really becoming the new thing. I'm not the first, but I will say I definitely made it popular. I made heels for men—for anyone—popular."

When Marshall and I chat again in May, he has more coming-out stories to share, like that of a young gay boy in Mexico who spilled his truth before running into Marshall's arms. But Marshall's success isn't without a little blowback. Though most map points are drawing throngs of pupils (the average turnout is 400, more than four times that of the Broadway Dance Center bunch), not all of them are releasing the rainbow balloons. In places like Russia and Dubai, for example, the class is both frowned upon and, in the case of the latter, illegal, and no one in either locale is high-kicking his way to the front to declare his queerness. Online, Marshall has given up reading negative comments, such as

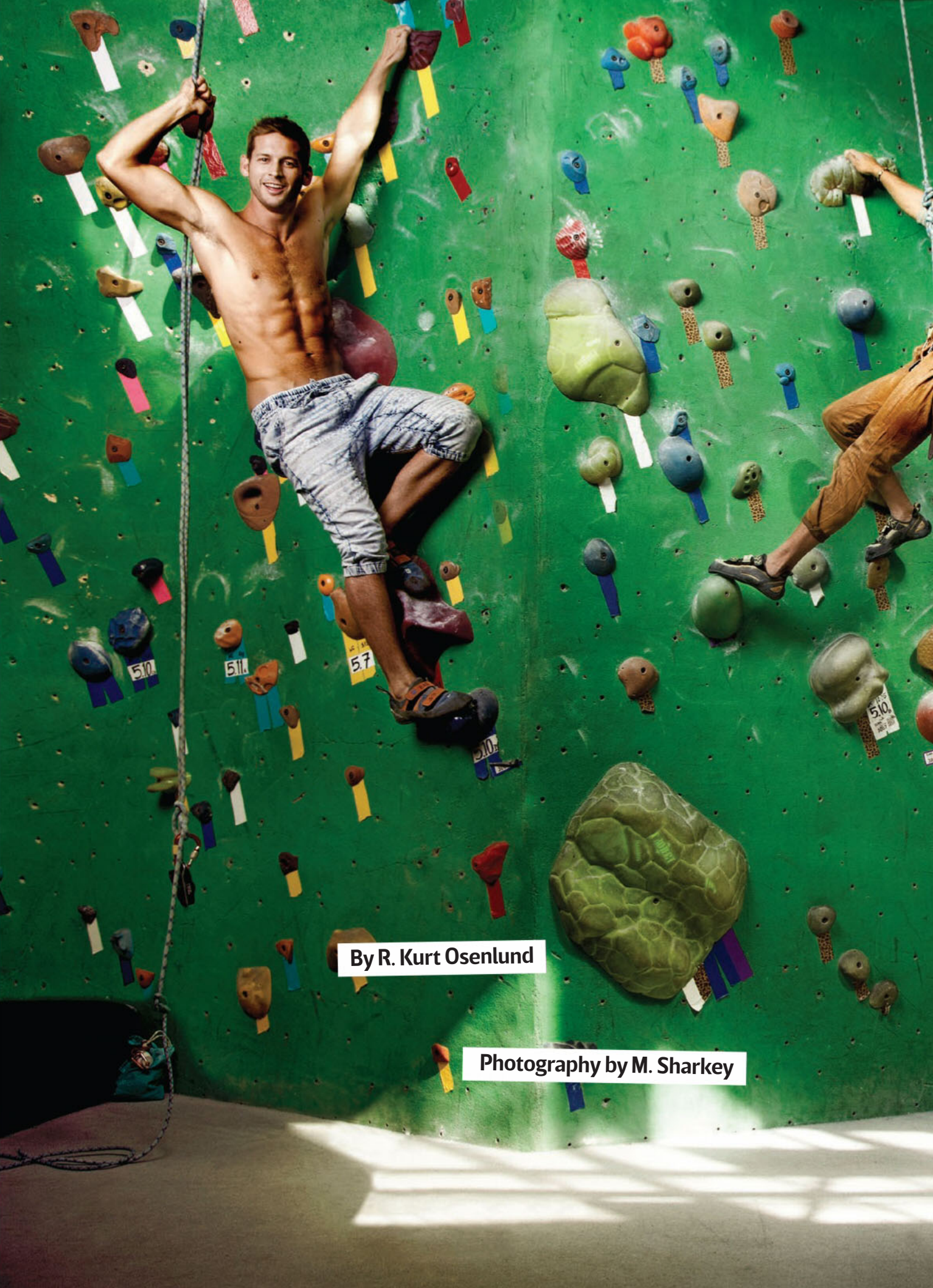
one from a viewer who wrote, "This video is so gay, I got HIV watching it."

Even within the industry itself, Marshall says he can sense touches of animosity, particularly from instructors whose facilities he's popping in and out of, and whose classes are thirsty for members while his sell out in 30 minutes. Alec Piliakas, 25 (pictured above, center), is someone who finds himself in the middle. Though he no longer dances full-time, he teaches street jazz at City Dance, the San Francisco studio where these class photos were shot. He's in the rare position of being a devout Marshall fan and also someone whose turf the heel wearer recently trod across. For him, it wasn't a threat but an honor, on both rock-star and camaraderie levels.

Piliakas doesn't dance in heels, but he gladly joined the class, taking full, avid advantage of the guest pass his position afforded him. Eventually, he wasn't only one of five students selected by Marshall to demonstrate the routine—he was one of the "gays, lesbians, and bisexuals" whose footwear squeaked on the wood as they shuffled to make themselves visible.

"It's empowering, and many times when you're gay and you're called out like that, it's not," Piliakas says. "But you want to be part of that group. I had straight girls I know who were there and claiming to be bisexual because they wanted to be featured—and be proud of it. Overall, that's Yanis's energy. He is unapologetic." ■

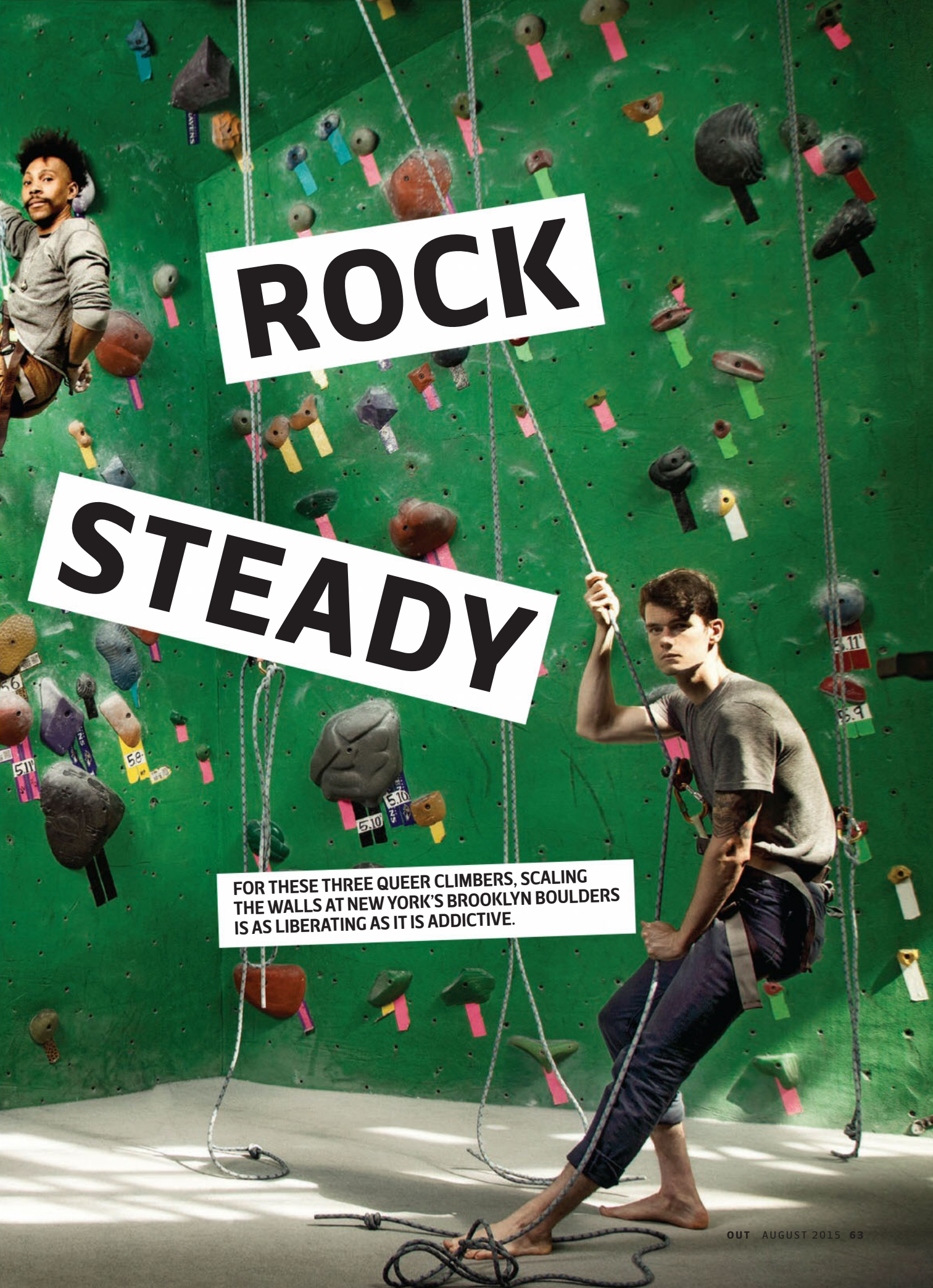




By R. Kurt Osenlund

Photography by M. Sharkey





# ROCK

# STEADY

FOR THESE THREE QUEER CLIMBERS, SCALING THE WALLS AT NEW YORK'S BROOKLYN BOULDERS IS AS LIBERATING AS IT IS ADDICTIVE.



**A**s a model, actor, writer, and social media hotshot, Max Emerson (or @maxisms, as he's known to his 150,000-plus Instagram followers) is always traveling, and when he swings by New York, he never passes up a visit to Brooklyn Boulders. "I haven't seen a gym that comprehensive since I went to China," Emerson, 26, says, "and they go big with everything out there." For Emerson, this epic climbing haven—a 22,000-square-foot facility with sister sites in Chicago, Somerville, and, just this year, New York's Queensbridge—is "a playground" of inclusion and ever-changing physical challenges. And he isn't the only queer climber who finds solace in his pursuit: When you're part of a minority where it can sometimes feel like you against the world, there's a great, symbolic thrill to the battle of you against the wall.

Brooklyn Boulders member Amos Massey III, 30, grew up in a small town in Florida near Tampa Bay—the rare black "effeminate male" in a predominantly white school. "I think right now there's a giant, 100-foot Confederate flag hanging along the main highway," he says, "and that pretty much paints a picture of how my childhood was." Massey largely avoided team sports because of their trademark machismo (for related reasons, he's not a fan of the muscle-body intimidation of traditional gyms), but he always loved being outside and getting dirty. He still loves the grit of the climb, hitting Brooklyn Boulders three to four times a week.

In fact, climbing has permeated nearly every aspect of Massey's life. Along with acupuncture and chiropractor visits, scaling the walls is an exercise that helps him manage the scoliosis he was diagnosed with at 15. It's made its way into the products he designs for his new Web store, AmosTheThird.com (his side gig when he's not serving as assistant auction manager at Housing Works). The site offers handmade jewelry alongside wallpaper featuring climbing-wall holds. And like an AA member who checks into a hotel and then finds his nearest meeting spot, Massey, when he travels, sniffs out the closest climbing gym. "I do it because I can't *not* do it," he says. "You're always thinking about a problem you couldn't solve the day before—something unfinished you need to accomplish."

For James Cobb, 29, a tech guru and military vet who served from 2006 to 2011, the biggest obstacle, for a while, was basic everyday life. Having spent two years of duty in Korea, Cobb, though not on the front lines, began to feel the weight of certain warfare consequences ("You're helping to make decisions that affect a lot of people," he says), and his return to the states, in Santa Barbara, Calif., was a transition on many levels. "I was trying to shift from a regimented

environment to a carefree civilian lifestyle," he says, "and right before I got out of the military, I came out to my very religious family as being an atheist and bisexual. I didn't have many people to talk to, so I dealt with it the only way I really knew how, which was to exercise."

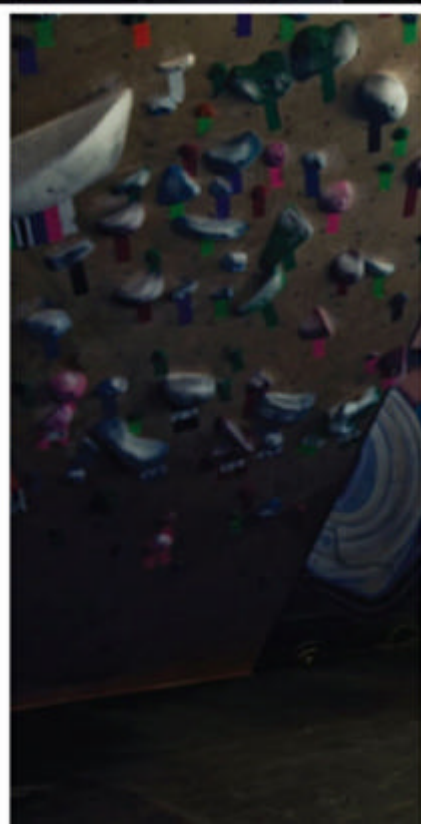
A friend turned Cobb on to a Santa Barbara climbing gym, and he immediately took to the sport's requirement to "be in the moment" and "focus on a very specific task."

When a job led Cobb to Boston, he soon found his way to Brooklyn Boulders' Somerville campus. When another job brought him to New York last summer, he simply transferred his membership.

Along the way, he dated men and women, sometimes at the same time, and he's currently in a monogamous relationship with a girlfriend. When he needs to decompress, he knows where to go. "At a regular gym, I would just work out and talk to someone from time to time," he says, "but at Brooklyn Boulders I eventually felt comfortable expressing certain issues I was having outside of climbing. It builds friendships."

For a single guy like Emerson (whose hangups about his thousands of shirtless, "narcissistic selfies" have been tempered by youths' embrace of his coming-out memoir, *Hot Sissy*), it can also spark relationships.

"Not so much a gym, but a sports club like this, is a great way to meet a wholesome type of dude," he says. "You can get to know someone so well when you're engaged in that kind of activity." Moreover, he says, climbing is inherently pro-equality. "It's the most practical of workouts. Everyone's body is so much more natural, and there's a reason for the movements. Guys can do it. Girls can do it. It doesn't discriminate." ■







Clockwise from left: James Cobb, Max Emerson, and Amos Massey III. Previous spread, from left: Emerson, Massey, Cobb

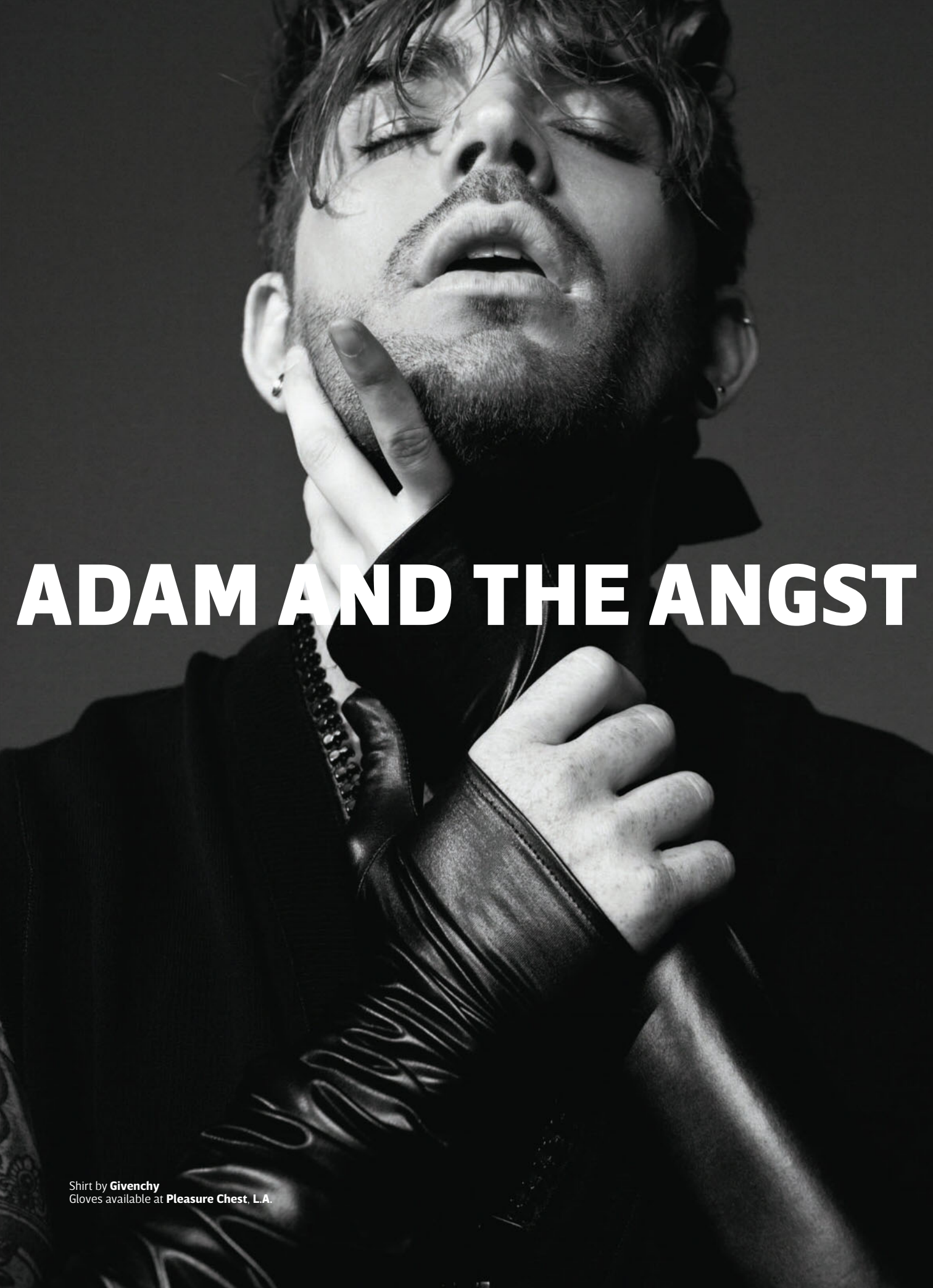


## FRIDAY NIGHT HEIGHTS

Meeting regularly at Brooklyn Boulders, CRUX has become America's largest LGBT climbing club.



**THE FIRST TIME** Kristen Riani climbed with CRUX ([ClimbCrux.org](http://ClimbCrux.org)), New York's 200-member-strong LGBT climbing organization, she was on a blind date. The coupling didn't pan out, but for the former dancer, the date planted a seed. "Eventually I needed to do something physical for myself, so I came to the gym one night and saw all the rainbow flags," Riani says. Four years later, Riani is CRUX's executive director, facilitating events and regular climbing sessions at Brooklyn Boulders and The Cliffs, a climbing gym in Long Island City. Now the largest group of its kind in the country, CRUX meets at Brooklyn Boulders every Friday night, and Riani says the facility's atmosphere is in sync with the confidence-boosting, open-arms ideology of the club, which is welcoming a growing number of trans members. "It's a place where people can find trust, and not judgment," she says. "You really see them come out of their shells." They also get out of town. For outdoor climbing, CRUX has visited sites in upstate New York, Kentucky, West Virginia, and Las Vegas, and this month they're set to head off to Maine. As for Riani, she found sparks she never expected. "[The girlfriend] didn't stick," she says. "But CRUX did." —**RKO**



# ADAM AND THE ANGST

Shirt by **Givenchy**  
Gloves available at **Pleasure Chest, L.A.**



## **ADAM LAMBERT'S NEW ALBUM, *THE ORIGINAL HIGH*, FINDS SOLID GROUND IN UNEASINESS.**

**FOR ADAM LAMBERT**, Hollywood isn't just a metaphor for success or disillusionment. It's a real place—his city for the last 15 years. It was his home before he ran away with all the accolades (if not the title) on *American Idol*, before he debuted an album at the top of the Billboard charts, before guest starring on *Glee*, and before fronting a stadium-rock band that ranks among the biggest *of all time*.

When it came time to write and record his new album, *The Original High*, he knew where his material would come from.

"I wanted the album to be a real snapshot of my life, my real life, my authentic life in L.A. over the past 15 years," says Lambert. "I wanted it to sound like music I listen to when I go out or when I'm at the fucking gym or in Runyon Canyon or in my car." He pauses. "It's a bit of a melancholy album, you know? It's talking about the ups and downs of life in Hollywood."

If Lambert had been singing specifically about his time in the music industry, the ups would certainly include the debut of his sophomore album, *Trespassing*, at the number 1 spot on the Billboard 200—a historic first for a gay artist; or being handpicked by Brian May and Roger Taylor to be heir apparent to Freddie Mercury as Queen's frontman in a globe-trotting tour. The downs might include disappointingly little radio play for *Trespassing*'s singles, despite that auspicious launch. Or it might include the reaction from his then-label, RCA Records.

## “WHAT IS IT THAT WE’RE CHASING? WHAT IS THE DRIVING FORCE HERE? IS IT HAPPINESS? IS IT SUCCESS? IS IT SEX? IS IT LOVE? IS IT VALIDATION?”

During the downtime following the release of *Trespassing*, Lambert was going out, going to dinners, and hanging out with friends. And his conversations with them had a new and different purpose. He began asking friends heavy stuff: What is it that you want? Why are you in this city? What are you looking for?

He says, “Most of the people that I asked weren’t able to answer it. ‘How the fuck are we supposed to know? I don’t know what I want.’ And I understood that. I was like, *Exactly*. What is it that we’re chasing? What is the driving force here? Is it happiness? Is it success? Is it sex? Is it love? Is it validation?”

Lambert went to RCA, armed with some new insights from those conversations and the experience of two albums, and said, “Let’s try something different.” But RCA had something different in mind as well: a 1980s cover album. Lambert thought about the proposal for a few weeks, and researched New Wave. “It didn’t feel like the right thing. So I said, ‘I don’t really want to do that,’ and they said, ‘Well, that’s what we want to do.’ And I said, ‘OK, I’m going to go.’”

Now a free agent for the first time, Lambert approached two of his former collaborators, the Swedish super-producers Max Martin and Shellback, who variously co-wrote and co-produced Britney Spears’s “...Baby One More Time,” Katy Perry’s “Roar,” Maroon 5’s “Moves Like Jagger,” and Taylor Swift’s “We Are Never Ever Getting Back Together.” He brought a demo of a new song titled “The Original High,” about chasing the rush of first times.

“Shell got really excited,” says Lambert. “He immediately heard how he could turn it into an even stronger song.” Martin and Shellback talked with Lambert about where life had been taking him, and he says they told him, “What if we executive produce the whole thing, the whole album?”

“I breathed a sigh of relief because, at that point, I wasn’t sure what the fuck was happening next,” Lambert says. “These two guys are people I respect so much and I also really enjoy them as people. They answered my prayers.”

Lambert spent eight weeks in Stockholm, working on new songs and meeting Martin and Shellback’s collective of musicians, known as Wolf Cousins. “Habits” singer Tove Lo was a part of that group, and together they wrote and recorded the song “Rumors” in Stockholm. She says collaborating was “a lot of fun, and also easy because he can sing the shit out of anything! We kind of want to share similar emotions in our music, so we understand each other lyrically.”

Lambert calls Shellback the “mad scientist” of the studio. “He

understands how to worm into people’s brains,” Lambert told a Stockholm audience in June. “He came up with this melody,” says Lambert, “and Tove Lo and I sat down and were like, ‘How do we make a story out of these cool sounds?’”

The album’s first single came from those earlier, ambivalent conversations about Los Angeles. “‘Ghost Town’ is kind of setting the scene,” Lambert says. “You moved to the big city, you have these ideas, you have these ambitions, and then what happens when you get to a fork in the road, or you hit a wall, and you’re like, *Oh, it’s not what I thought it was going to be, or I’m not getting what I thought I wanted, and everything I thought I knew is being called into question?* How does that make you feel?” He quotes his lyrics: “‘My heart is a ghost town.’ I feel empty. I feel unfulfilled.”

So the song wasn’t primarily about a breakup? “It rolls into that,” he says, laughing. “You can spend a lot of your energy in a place like Hollywood chasing ass.”

“Evil in the Night”—despite high-energy steel guitar, bombastic lyrics, and just a touch of Jamiroquai-esque funk—feels like a refinement of a signature Lambert sound.

“I chilled out a little bit. I don’t know if it’s just being in my 30s,” he says. “When you’re younger and you’ve got a skill, you tend to show off more—you feel like you have more to prove. Over the last few years, I’ve gotten into a place where I feel a little more confident in what I do, and I don’t feel I need to prove myself as far as ‘look at all the tricks I can do.’ Now music for me is more about wanting to prove that I can feel something.”

With a new album in full swing, Lambert had to publicly announce his parting of the ways with RCA in July 2013, simultaneously announcing that he’d signed on to appear on *Glee*’s fifth season. Warner Bros. contacted Lambert the next day.

“It was scary leaving the label,” says Lambert, but WB’s arrival made him feel confident. “It made me feel better about all of this, made me feel like there was a light at the end of the tunnel. That paired with Max and Shellback’s interest in doing the whole album—it was just like, *This is all going to work. I know it’s going to work.*”

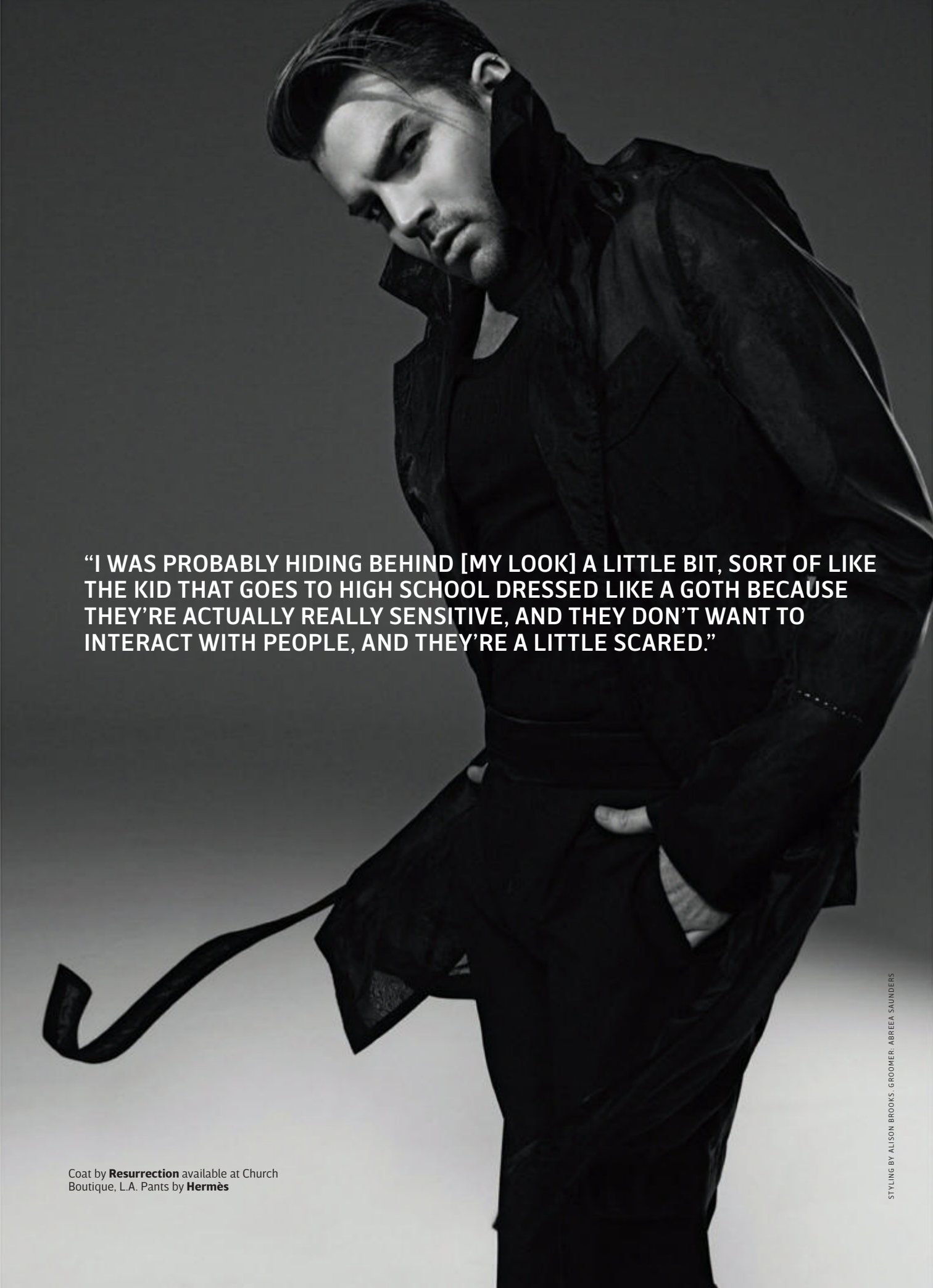
**LAMBERT GREW UP IN SAN DIEGO**, joining a children’s theater company at age 10. At 12, he floored the audience with a powerful operatic solo in *Fiddler on the Roof*.

After moving to Los Angeles, he worked in theater, including *Ten Commandments: The Musical* with Val Kilmer, and the first





Tank top by **John Varvatos**  
Jacket by **Resurrection** available  
at Church Boutique, L.A.



“I WAS PROBABLY HIDING BEHIND [MY LOOK] A LITTLE BIT, SORT OF LIKE THE KID THAT GOES TO HIGH SCHOOL DRESSED LIKE A GOTH BECAUSE THEY’RE ACTUALLY REALLY SENSITIVE, AND THEY DON’T WANT TO INTERACT WITH PEOPLE, AND THEY’RE A LITTLE SCARED.”

Coat by **Resurrection** available at Church  
Boutique, L.A. Pants by **Hermès**



national touring company and L.A. production of *Wicked*. Though he'd been out since age 18, his newfound fame on the eighth season of *American Idol* brought the kind of scrutiny at age 27 for which an ensemble performer and Fiyero understudy couldn't have prepared himself. His skillful reworking of Johnny Cash's "Ring of Fire" and Tears for Fears' "Mad World," accompanying his darkly glamorous stage attire and affect (in contrast with his ultimately forgettable competition), made him an *Idol* audience favorite.

But before the season ended, Lambert appeared on the cover of *Entertainment Weekly*; the accompanying article speculated on his sexual orientation in light of his winking onstage sensibility and outré fashion. Pictures surfaced of him making out with a man (whom he later revealed was an ex-boyfriend) on a Burning Man social media site, Tribe.net. Lambert neither confirmed nor denied anything, to the frustration of many. Shortly after *Idol* wrapped in May 2009, and Lambert was awarded the runner-up spot, he came out in a cover story in *Rolling Stone*, but continued to field complaints for appearing in a *Details* photo shoot in which he suggestively grabbed a naked woman, and for subsequent tightly orchestrated media appearances. He essentially wasn't being gay enough.

There's no way to know exactly how much being out has contributed to or detracted from Lambert's career, but it would be easy to understand why he may have felt he'd rather unfairly gone through the ringer. But he says he feels no envy for those musicians who've come out since he did, and may be having an easier go of it. Lambert praised gay singer Sam Smith to *Attitude* recently, saying, "I'm so happy for him, and I'm so happy his sexuality wasn't a big thorn in his side."

"It was just the way things went down," Lambert says. "At that time, how many mainstream music artists did we have that were out? Elton John and George Michael—and his whole coming out was tabloid fun. There hadn't been a blueprint to follow. That was the one thing I wished I'd had: a little more guidance. There were definitely moments of frustration and pressure, but there's been a lot of goodwill as well, a lot of support from fans and media people, and it's balanced out. I don't have any sort of bitterness about it."

Lambert has also forged a connection with Freddie

Mercury, a queer artist of the past of whom he was a fan, and with whom he shares more than an octave-defying range. In 2009, May and Taylor performed Queen's "We Are the Champions" live on the season finale of *Idol* with winner Kris Allen and runner-up Lambert in a vocal duet. Impressed with Lambert, they invited him to serve as their frontman at the 2011 *MTV Europe Music Awards*, on a brief European tour the next year, and on a world tour in 2014 and 2015.

"I've heard nothing but incredible stories about him," Lambert says of Mercury. May and Taylor both told him that they'd have gotten on well, that he shared Mercury's sense of humor. "From what I gathered, he seemed like a really sweet guy, actually—and a bit shy socially. I would have loved to meet him." Lambert and his Queen bandmates have talked a lot about Mercury, including how out he was. "Technically, he wasn't really closeted. I mean, he did interviews early on where they were like, 'Are you gay?' and he was like, 'Oh, yeah, gay as a daffodil, darling,'" Lambert says and laughs. "But nobody really believed it because they didn't want to. It was so taboo at that time that people didn't actually think he would have been."

In the promotion of his new album, fans have noticed Lambert's new look, a touch easier on the velvet and mascara. "I just generally grew out of that old look and enjoyed new ones—it's as simple as that," he says. "There's also a point where I was working really hard to achieve a look that I was really into, and it was really fun and I wanted to stand out and be crazy and be weird and make a statement with the stuff I was wearing. I look back on some of those red carpet looks, and I'm like, *What were you thinking?*"

"It's like growing pains, but I was just trying to express myself. Looking back on it now, I can see that I was probably hiding behind it a little bit, sort of like the kid that goes to high school dressed like a goth because they're actually really sensitive and they don't want to interact with people and they're a little scared."

Though the studio work is meticulously planned, some other parts of Lambert's life aren't, and that's OK. "Everybody thinks everything is so premeditated and thought-out," he says. Some things are "just impulse...because I felt like it."

But he says, "Six years is a while, and now I'm in a new space and time in my life, and I'm hoping that my music and my image all match where I'm at." ■



# THE EXHIB

Sneakers by Dior Homme





# ITIONIST

PHOTOGRAPHY BY  
GREG VAUGHAN  
STYLING BY  
GRANT WOOLHEAD

Sunglasses by **Lacoste**



Hat by  
**Dsquared2**





Bike and blanket by Hermès



Backpack, necklace, ring,  
and watch by **Versace**





Sunglasses by Calvin Klein





Blanket by **Louis Vuitton**



Scarf by  
**Tommy Hilfiger**



Backpack by  
**Ermenegildo  
Zegna Couture**



Market editor: Michael Cook  
Groomer: Scott McMahon  
Model: Walter Savage at Soul Artist Management





Loafers by **Gucci**

# HOW DO WE HELP STOP HIV?

A. PREVENT IT.

B. TEST FOR IT.

C. TREAT IT.

D. ALL OF THE ABOVE.



Learn how it all works together at  
[HelpStopTheVirus.com](http://HelpStopTheVirus.com)

STOP THE VIRUS.



# Surveillance

THE OUT GUIDE TO LIFE'S DEEPEST MYSTERIES



MARKET EDITOR: MICHAEL COOK. CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: ULYSSE NARDIN, \$8,500. LOUIS VUITTON, \$5,750. MOVADO, \$1,495. DAVID YURMAN, \$7,200. HERMÈS, \$4,625.

## Getting Wet

Too few of us can chase the summer all year round, like the young guys in the classic 1966 surf movie *The Endless Summer*. But you're just not doing the season right if you don't take the opportunity to get drenched. From diving watches to swimsuits, we've got your beach kit covered. Use it while you can.

# Nautical Needs

A little bit of gear can take you far away from shore, and just somewhat outside of your comfort zone.



## The Need for Speed

Surf skis are long, narrow kayaks made for zipping through the waves—but slicing through the water like a razor means less stabilizing surface, and consequently surf skiing is typically a master sport. But the **Ignite**, a new model from Current Designs, is engineered to flatten out that learning curve to make surf skiing accessible to newbies and dabblers—while still looking badass. \$2,599, [CDKayak.com](http://CDKayak.com)



## Below the Surface

Even snorkeling is benefiting from a design reboot. The **EasyBreath** snorkel lets you breathe better underwater, with your mouth *and* nose. The large mask surface won't fog up like the old models, and offers an unobstructed 180-degree field of vision. \$61, [Tribord.co.uk](http://Tribord.co.uk)



## Cooling Spritz

Prefer soaking in the scene beachside to conquering the surf? Don't forget the sunscreen, and refresh yourself occasionally with a mist of pure **Evian Facial Natural Mineral Water Spray**, 5 oz., \$14.99.



## You Can Take It With You

Lash this hardy little **SurfSafe** case (with your keys, wallet, and Kiehl's lip balm) to the inside of your seagoing vessel and the contents will stay dry until you're back on solid ground. \$6.25, [WitzSportCases.com](http://WitzSportCases.com)



**PRO TIP:** When preparing for SUP, always assume the Ready Position: feet shoulder-width apart, knees slightly bent, and your back straight. This position not only helps to stabilize your body while you're paddling but also allows for a workout of the back muscles.

## Work It Out

The full-body exercise of stand-up paddle boarding

Stand-up paddle boarding provides the body with an intense cardio workout that your burning muscles might despise you for, but your six-pack abs will greatly appreciate. Because much of SUP requires a great deal of balance, leg muscles such as the quadriceps and hamstrings are constantly at work. SUP also works out both the arm and shoulder muscles when a rider uses the paddle to move the board across the surface of the water. Now you can get a full-body workout all while making it look like a day at the beach.



## All Hands on Deck

The most stylish swimsuits for your summer of fun



### BEST FOR...SNORKELING

Berry Zag lifeguard briefs by **Charlie** by **Matthew Zink**, \$75, [CharlieByMZ.com](http://CharlieByMZ.com)



### BEST FOR...PADDLE BOARDING

Palm Ibiza swim shorts by **2xist**, \$75, [2xist.com](http://2xist.com)



### BEST FOR...SURFING

Catalonia Sunset shorts by **Parke & Ronen**, \$147, [ParkeAndRonen.com](http://ParkeAndRonen.com)



## Where to Go for Watersports in America

The country's top destinations to swim, surf, and scuba dive —*Brandon Presser*

### 1. SURF: **Lost Coast, California**

You may think of swaying palms and warm sand when it comes to top surfing spots, but the pros know that California's best breaks lie north of Mendocino near the village of Shelter Cove.

### 2. SCUBA: **Lake Huron, Michigan**

The Great Lakes' freshwater makes for some of the clearest diving in North America, with roughly 200 Industrial Era wrecks to explore. Float over to Fathom Five National Marine Park, on the Canadian shore, for the region's best sites.

### 3. KITEBOARDING: **Maui, Hawaii**

The Aloha State practically invented the sport, and Hawaii's idyllic isle offers perfect breezes for top-notch kites, and plenty of opportunities for newbies to cut their teeth on.

### 4. KAYAK: **The Keys, Florida**

Key Largo's John Pennekamp Coral Reef State Park is a haven for kayakers and an easy day away from Miami. Superstars can follow the state's designated overseas paddling trail all the way down to Key West (figure nine days).

## DIVING WATCHES

These timepieces are handsome, hardy, and practical, and the ultimate marker of the adventuring spirit. Sometimes sinking to the bottom is the best way to test what rises to the top.



Clipper Sport Watch by **Hermès**, \$4,625, [Hermes.com](http://Hermes.com)



Series 800 by **Movado**, \$1,495, [Movado.com](http://Movado.com)



Revolution™ Shelby 1000 43.5 mm Chronograph Watch by **David Yurman**, \$7,200, [DavidYurman.com](http://DavidYurman.com)



Marine Diver Watch by **Ulysse Nardin**, \$8,500, [Ulysse-Nardin.com](http://Ulysse-Nardin.com)



Tambour Diving II Blue Automatic by **Louis Vuitton**, \$5,750, [LouisVuitton.com](http://LouisVuitton.com)

## STORE INFO

**2xist** 2xist.com

**Adidas** Adidas.com

**Alternative**  
AlternativeApparel.com

**Ann Demeulemeester**  
AnnDemeulemeester.be

**Barney's** Barneys.com

**Bern** BernUnlimited.com

**Calvin Klein** CalvinKlein.com

**Church Boutique**  
ChurchBoutique.com

**Dior Homme** Dior.com

**Dsquared2** Dsquared2.com

**Fjällräven** Fjallraven.us

**Givenchy** Givenchy.com

**Gucci** Gucci.com

**Hermès** Hermes.com

**John Varvatos**  
JohnVarvatos.com

**Lacoste** Lacoste.com

**Levi's** Levi.com

**Louis Vuitton** LouisVuitton.com

**Macy's** Macys.com

**Montana Rader**  
MontanaRader.com

**Original Penguin**  
OriginalPenguin.com

**Parker** ParkerNY.com

**Reebok** Reebok.com

**Schwinn** Schwinn.com

**Sugoi** Sugoi.com

**Pleasure Chest**  
ThePleasureChest.com

**Tommy Hilfiger** Tommy.com

**Topman** Topman.com

**Versace** Versace.com

**Ermenegildo Zegna Couture**  
Zegna.com



Clockwise from top: Paris Plages,  
Streets Beach, Valley of the Waves

## Designer Beaches

These artificial strands are as good as the real thing.

### 1. Larvotto Beach, Monte Carlo, Monaco

At this luxury artificial beach, visitors can enjoy walks along pebbled shores not too far from La Note Bleue, a lounge-style bar set off in its own private area.

### 2. Artificial Beach, Malé, Maldives

Located in its capital city, the artificial beach in the Maldives is a perfect spot for both families and couples, providing a fun day under the sun or an evening shoreline stroll for two.

### 3. Valley of the Waves, Sun City, South Africa

A water theme park, the Valley of the Waves provides visitors with the illusion of a sensational beachy island. It even has a wave generator for fun.

### 4. Odaiba Beach, Tokyo, Japan

Odaiba is a man-made beach that offers an extraordinary view of skyscrapers and Rainbow Bridge.



Wavegarden demo center

### 5. Paris Plages, Paris, France

Paris Plages is a project that annually turns different areas and banks in the city into artificial beaches for tourists and families to have a sandy place to go in the summer.

### 6. South Bank Parklands' Streets Beach, Brisbane, Australia

Australia's only inner-city, man-made beach, Streets Beach is a must-go for both touring families and visitors who enjoy a tropical atmosphere that can only be provided by its white, sandy shores and exotic plants.

### 7. Wavegarden, Dolgarrog, Wales

Wavegarden will be having its first European opening of an artificial surfing facility this summer.



a time of plague was as one of the infected. And though few people would have endorsed this position openly in the years before combination therapy became available, the number of gay men who hurriedly capitulated to HIV after 1996—their surrender guided (goaded?) by a new pornographic lexicon of “bug chasers” and “gift givers,” the redefinition of “breeder” from a derogatory term for a heterosexual to a heroic name for a man who “gave” his HIV to his partner—suggests that from the beginning of the epidemic part of the fascination with AIDS was the desire to have it. To live with it? To die from it? I suspect it’s probably neither, which is to say, I suspect the HIV these men wanted was the phantasmic kind that brings “meaning” to life rather than sickness or pain or death—the kind that Derek had in other words, rather than the kind my friend Gordon had, and that killed him in 1996.

Which brings me back to my original question: Did pretending to be HIV-positive help Derek do the work that he did, or was it incidental? I don’t know the answer to that question, nor do I know how you’d ascertain it. Certainly not by asking Derek: Why in the world would you believe something a pathological liar told you? What I do know is this: We were walking down East 14th Street one day, either between First and A or A

***“Did pretending to be HIV-positive help Derek do the work that he did, or was it incidental? I don’t know the answer to that question, nor do I know how you’d ascertain it.”***

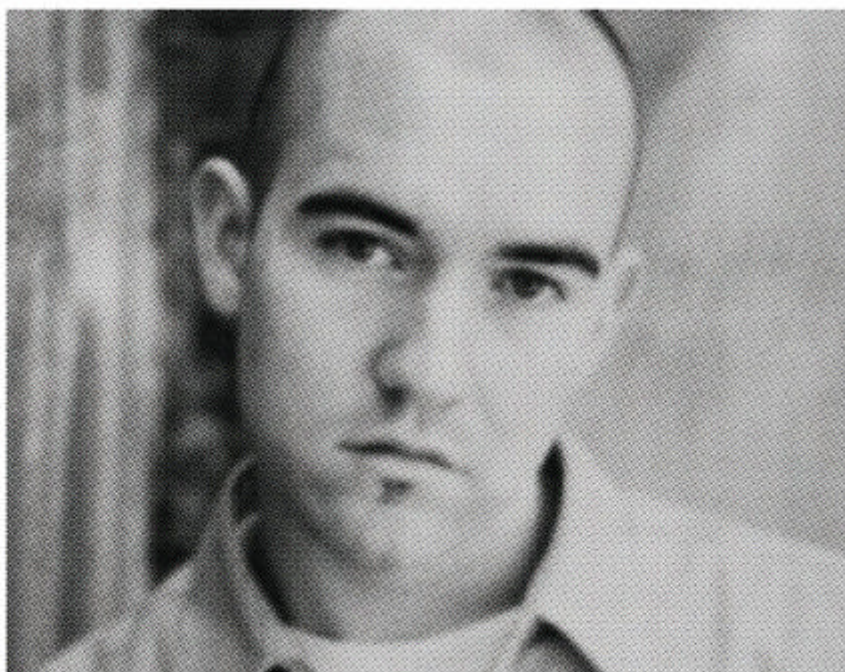
and B (I remember we passed the post office) and I was asking him why he’d stopped painting. There was more than a little uneasiness behind my question, because a part of me considered the time I spent as an activist as time I didn’t spend writing, and vice versa. But I was surprised by Derek’s answer. Art interfered with a direct experience of the world, Derek told me, and he wanted to experience the world firsthand. I asked him to elaborate and without missing a beat he pointed to a homeless man sleeping on the sidewalk. It was January, and the man was covered by newspapers, and Derek said, Art is like those newspapers. It covers up the

real world, and the best that you can hope for is to see something through it. But whatever you see is going to be colored by art. Obscured by it. You’re not going to see the real thing. You’re going to see the artist’s interpretation. Implicit in Derek’s notion of art is the idea that it’s always representational, of processes and ideas as much as objects and people. Most artists I know accept the idea that mimesis contains a greater or lesser degree of falsity even as its core—its intention—remains truthful, but what Derek seemed to be telling me was that, however much truth there is in representation, the *intention* is always false. To falsify. I didn’t want to believe that then and, 23 years later, I still don’t want to believe it. But I’ve always believed it—have believed it helplessly, which is why I’ve never even tried to make art that depicts the world as it actually is, but instead try to make art that points out its own biases, its own falseness, and the necessary illusions without which life is impossible. So that, if nothing else, the reader will know that what he’s looking at is fiction, not history, and certainly not the world. I believed in 1991, when I was 23 years old, that those two— or three—dozen words were the single most important lesson anyone had ever taught me about the moral stakes of all forms of representation, political as well as aesthetic, and I believe it still. When I wrote in my journal that Derek was “a more authentic version of myself,” I believed that he had genuinely endured the horrors, as a child of violence and a gay man in a viciously homophobic society, that I had only witnessed, and I believe it still. I believed that Derek lived his life by a moral code I only made feints at, and even after I found out that the biography he’d presented me was not just false, but malignantly so, in light of the pain his revelation inflicted on those men and women who had loved him, and fought beside him, and in some very real sense died for him, I continued to believe it.

I believe it still. ■

*Excerpted from Visions and Revisions, published by Soho Press.*

Dale Peck



4,000 WORDS

# Necessary Scruffness

*Cozying Up with the Gay Beards*



Credit Kesha for first drawing our attention to Brian Delaurenti and Johnathan Dahl, the two best friends behind the social media sensation the Gay Beards. Not long ago, the pop star tweeted an image of Delaurenti and Dahl's beards decked in flowers and wrote, "I love a beard who is in touch with his feminine side." Now the two men are indebted. "We owe finding endless amounts of glitter in our beards to her," says Dahl. The duo started their furry, yet refined, Instagram account as an easy way to fuel each other's creativity. But as their audience grew (23,200 followers as of press time), the gents soon found themselves on a constant hunt for outlandish things to adorn their scruff, from moss and twigs to pipe cleaners and Dum Dum lollipops. "The Gay Beards has become this really beautiful outlet to have fun with," says Dahl, "a place to laugh and encourage others to be comfortable with who they are." And, indeed, with what's on their face.

COURTESY OF THE GAY BEARDS



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